

Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art

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Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art

Edited by

Yuka Kadoi



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*For Arthur Upham Pope—who gave Persian art
an art history*



Contents

Preface and Acknowledgements	XI
List of Illustrations	XIV
Abbreviations	XVIII
Note to the Reader	XX
Notes on Contributors	XXI

Introduction

- 1 Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art 3
Yuka Kadoi

PART 1

Pope, Ackerman, and Their Peers

- 2 The Scramble for Persian Art: Pope and His Rivals 15
Robert Hillenbrand
- 3 Gendered Politics of Persian Art: Pope and His Partner 47
Talinn Grigor

PART 2

Arthur Upham Pope: Life and Achievements

- 4 Arthur Upham Pope: His Life and Times 77
Jonathan M. Bloom
- 5 Archaeology in Iran and the Experience of Arthur Upham Pope 97
Donald Whitcomb
- 6 Arthur Upham Pope and the Study of Persian Islamic Architecture 111
Bernard O'Kane

PART 3

Curators, Collectors, and Art Dealers: Pope and Pre-Islamic Persian Art

- 7 'The Greatest Enterprise': Arthur Upham Pope, Persepolis and Achaemenid Antiquities 127
Lindsay Allen
- 8 Arthur Upham Pope and the Sasanians 169
Judith A. Lerner

PART 4

Curators, Collectors, and Art Dealers: Pope and Islamic Persian Art

- 9 The Rise of Persian Art Connoisseurship: Arthur Upham Pope and Early Twentieth-Century Chicago 235
Yuka Kadoi
- 10 Arthur Upham Pope and Collecting Persian Art for Kansas City 267
Kimberly Masteller
- 11 Equivocal Position as Expert or Dealer! The Long and Contentious Relationship of George Hewitt Myers and Arthur Upham Pope 291
Sumru Belger Krody
- 12 My Dear Holmes: Arthur Upham Pope and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 309
Laura Weinstein
- 13 Filming, Photographing and Purveying in 'The New Iran': The Legacy of Stephen H. Nyman, ca. 1937–42 327
Keelan Overton

PART 5

Arthur Upham Pope: His Legacy

- 14 Surveying Persian Art in Light of *A Survey of Persian Art* 373
 Sheila S. Blair
- 15 Arthur Upham Pope: A Personal Memoir 397
 Cornelia Montgomery
- Index 413

Preface and Acknowledgements

This volume grows out of the international symposium, *Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art*, held at the Art Institute of Chicago on September 9–10, 2010. In conjunction with the exhibition of the Art Institute's historically important collection of Persian art, which was developed under the guidance of Pope as an Advisory Curator of Muhammadan Art in the late 1920s–early 1930s, the symposium not only offered a novel insight into the life and achievements of Pope but also aroused a fresh academic interest in the historiography of Persian art.

I am most grateful to the Art Institute of Chicago for having hosted this wonderful event, intermingled with the local university's faculty members, graduate students and general audiences on a pleasant late summer day in the Windy City. I am also indebted to the generous financial support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation which endowed my position at the Art Institute of Chicago and enabled me to curate an exhibition, as well as to conduct research on Pope and Islamic art collections in Chicago and various locations of the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

As the organizer of this symposium, I wish to acknowledge those who have contributed their time and knowledge to this event. The symposium participants, together with additional contributors to the volume, were so enthusiastic, conscientious, and patient that I felt obliged to commit myself to continue investigating Pope's career. Noël Siver, one of the editors of *Surveyors of Persian Art*, was an integral part of the symposium as an honored guest and also generously agreed to act as an advisor for the current volume.

Many people in Chicago helped me on various matters over the course of preparing the symposium, the exhibition, and the current volume. My special thanks go to Karen Manchester, the former Chair of the Asian and Ancient Art Department, during the crucial time of my stay at the Art Institute of Chicago. Without her guidance, encouragement, and kind concerns, I would have been unable to complete the project. The members of the Department also kept encouraging me to confront the complexity of exhibition organization and made sure that I could survive under the infamous Chicago weather. I was particularly inspired by the curatorship and scholarship of Elinor Pearlstein, Associate Curator of Chinese Art, who knows the history of Asian collections in Chicago more than anyone else, whereas Mary Albert, the former Collection Manager, was always thoughtfully offering any sort of help and made my days at the museum brighter. I also would like to thank Matt Saba and Sandy Williams for their support during their internship stay at the AIC.

Returning to Scotland, it was rewarding for me to work closely with colleagues at Edinburgh's Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (IMES) who had a different idea about so-called 'Islamic art history,' an issue which I was able to readdress in the current volume from interdisciplinary perspectives. Finally, I had the privilege of finalizing the manuscript of the current volume as a visiting senior fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, in 2015. This gave me an invaluable opportunity not only to revisit various archives in the US but also to discover some new pieces of information.

My archival research on Pope was made possible by the generosity of the following institutions which gave me access to their valuable records: the Oriental Institute Archives, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Newberry Library, Chicago, IL; Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Washington, DC; Textile Museum, Washington, DC; Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, New York, NY; Harvard Art Museum Archives, Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Archives, Cambridge, MA; Fine Art Special Collections, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin; Central Archive, Berlin State Museums (SMB), Berlin; German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Berlin; Central Archive, British Museum, London; Victoria and Albert Museum Archives, London; British Library, London; Courtauld Institute of Art Conway Library, London; Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Archives, London; Royal Academy of Art Archives, London; Berenson Archives, Villa I Tatti, Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence; Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) Archives, Vienna; Royal Ontario Museum Archives, Toronto; Montreal Fine Arts Museum, Montreal; and State Hermitage Museum Archives, St. Petersburg.

Like many other ambitious volume projects, the preparation of the current volume was tedious and circuitous. I faced many difficulties and challenges during the period between late 2013 and early 2014, and, almost fatally, I lost my red USB stick that contained much valuable data on Pope I accumulated over years at the Amsterdam Schiphol Airport in November 2013. I nearly said 'khoda-hafez' to this volume project, so it was a miracle that the manuscript of the volume was completed in the end. I would particularly like to note this experience in the preface, hoping that my red USB stick will be found eventually somewhere in the world.

For my very long journey to Pope's Persia, the following individuals are particularly helpful for participating in the symposium, for contributing their chapters to the current volume, for finding useful records and photographs, extremely generous for sharing their knowledge on Persian and Islamic art historiography, for offering their insightful comments on Pope, or conscientiously

supportive for my rather unusual research inquiries: Lindsay Allen, Lara Amrod, Sheila Blair, Daniele Blanchette, Joanne Bloom, Jonathan Bloom, Charlotte Chaffey, Marion Covey, Isabella Donadio, Elizabeth Dunn, Massumeh Farhad, Mohammad Gharipour, Joachim Gierlichs, Elizabeth Graves, Talinn Grigor, Kurt Heffrich, Carole Hillenbrand, Robert Hillenbrand, Janet Johnson, Barbara Karl, Sumru Belger Krody, Karin Kyburz, John Larson, Judith Lerner, Franklin Lewis, Pavel Lurje, Kimberly Masteller, Mary McWilliams, Leslee Katrina Michelsen, Ilaria Della Monica, Cornelia Montgomery, Tal Nadan, Alexander Nagel, Bernard O’Kane, Keelan Overton, Marc Pelletreau, John Perry, Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, Mark Pomeroy, Deborah Pope, Jacqueline Protka, Julian Raby, András Riedlemeyer, Megan Schwenke, Shirin Shafiee, Zeynep Simavi, Dawn Sueoka, Iván Szántó, Daria Vasilyeva, Laura Vigo, Stefan Weber, Laura Weinstein, Donald Whitcomb, Elizabeth Williams, all staff members at the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, as well as those who are individually acknowledged in each chapter. I am particularly indebted to Jens Kröger, who shared his awesome biographical knowledge on German Islamic art historians with me, as well as to David Hogge, who encouraged me to explore the mystery of archives. Equally inspiring was my first and last encounter with Richard Nelson Frye (1920–2014) at the Sixth Biennial Convention of the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS) in Sarajevo in September 2013. I had an opportunity to talk briefly about Pope with him, but I greatly regret that I did not think of recording this as an example of oral history.

Editorial aspects of the current volume were greatly enhanced and upgraded, thanks to Peter Head and Thorsten Hanke. They kept careful eyes on multifaceted stylistic issues throughout the production process of the current volume, and the publication of the volume would not have been realized without their help. Lastly, I would like to thank the Brill editors for their encouragement during the past five years, in particular to Kathy van Vliet, Teddi Dols, and Pieter te Velde.

Through my intensive archival study on Arthur Upham Pope, I began to establish an unusual acquaintance with this legendary figure. Although I was unable to meet him in person, it was as if I knew what he thought, envisioned, and hoped through a thousand letters he left for various archives. I was thrilled to see how he battled with his rivals, exchanged his grand ideas with his colleagues, and bewitched his customers. Pope’s letters, both hand-written and typed, can therefore be regarded as *objects d’art* in their own right.

Yuka Kadoi

South Queensferry, 2016

List of Illustrations

- 1.1 Cartoon of an ailing individual (Arthur Upham Pope?) being cared for by medical personnel 2
- 1.2 Ayoub Rabenou and Isfahani craftsmen 5
- 2.1 Arthur Upham Pope photographing on top of a small dome of the Masjid-i Jami' of Isfahan, 1929 14
- 2.2 Eric Schroeder in early middle age, at Alteoli's House, Kirman, undated 21
- 2.3 Eric Schroeder in his last years, May 1970 21
- 2.4 Staff of the 1939 expedition in the portal of the sanctuary, Masjid-i Jami' of Isfahan 22
- 2.5 Donald Wilber as Shaykh Wilber, during his residence at Luxor 25
- 2.6 Donald and Margaret Wilber at Pir-i Bakran 25
- 2.7 Donald and Margaret Wilber by the expedition vehicle 25
- 2.8 Myron Bement Smith 26
- 2.9 Robert Byron 26
- 2.10 Erich Schmidt 27
- 2.11 André and Yedda Godard, Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran 27
- 2.12 Katharine and Myron Smith beside their vehicle 30
- 2.13 Myron Smith with a ground plan 30
- 2.14 Ernst Herzfeld as a young man 37
- 2.15 Ernst Herzfeld photographed in front of Persepolis reliefs 37
- 3.1 Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman in their study, Asia Institute, New York, 1947 46
- 3.2 Mohsen Foroughi: Mausoleum of Phyllis Ackerman and Arthur Upham Pope, Isfahan, 1972 49
- 3.3 Reza Shah's Cabinet members and other high-ranking officials during a horserace event in Gorgan, ca. 1928 51
- 3.4 The New York Congress with Ackerman and Isa Sadiq 60
- 3.5 André Godard, main and southern façade of the Archaeological Museum of Iran (Muzeh-yi Iran Bastan), Tehran 1936–9 63
- 3.6 Pope's letter to Muhammad Reza Shah, reproduced as inscription inside the mausoleum 67
- 3.7 New plaques indicating the names and dates of Arthur Pope and Phyllis Ackerman on the exterior of their joint tomb, Isfahan, 1972 70
- 4.1 *Catalogue Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst Loan Collection* 76
- 5.1 Pope and Schmidt at Tepe Hissar in 1932 96
- 5.2 Schmidt's excavations in the Tari (Tarikh) Khana mosque 99

- 5.3 Breasted's airplane at Persepolis in 1932 99
- 5.4 Ceramic waster from Kashan 101
- 5.5 Sorting sherds in the Istakhr excavations in 1937 103
- 5.6 Airphoto of Takht-i Sulayman by Erich F. Schmidt 103
- 5.7 Plan of the site of Takht-i Sulayman by Donald N. Wilber 104
- 5.8 Panel of senmurvs from Chal Tarkhan and the Art Institute of Chicago example 107
- 6.1 Gunbad-i Qabus, photographed by Pope 110
- 6.2 Detail of Kufic inscription, mihrab, Varamin Friday Mosque 115
- 7.1 Herzfeld encamped in the Palace of Darius I at Persepolis, above its Southern stairway in the 1920s 126
- 7.2 Boston's first Persepolis relief 147
- 8.1 Plaster reproduction of a Sasanian rock relief, commissioned by Pope for the Persian Pavilion, 1926 Sesquicentennial Exposition, Philadelphia 168
- 8.2 Head of a Sasanian king, most likely from Chal Tarkhan 177
- 8.3 Section of the "Sasanian Wall" prior to assemblage, December 5, 1930 179
- 8.4 Reconstructed "Sasanian Portal" with lion's heads and feet installed 201
- 8.5 Reconstructed "Sasanid Portal" from Kish 201
- 8.6 Salver showing a domed garden pavilion 209
- 8.7 Plate with Sasanian king hunting 218
- 9.1 The Persian Palace, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893 234
- 9.2 Bernard Berenson, ca. 1903 247
- 9.3 Sir Joseph Duveen, art authority, wife & daughter Dorothy, ca. 1910–20 252
- 9.4 Arthur Upham Pope: *Catalogue of A Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets* 256
- 9.5 The Persian Gallery, Art Institute of Chicago, ca. 1933–4 260
- 9.6 Window grille, Iran, fifteenth century 260
- 10.1 Photograph featuring the Mosaic Spandrels of an Arch, probably Isfahan region, Iran, early seventeenth century 266
- 10.2 Bowl, Iran, late twelfth-early thirteenth century 278
- 10.3 Bowl, 32–26, after removal of overpaint and later gilding 278
- 10.4 Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants, from the site of Rayy, near Tehran, Iran, late twelfth-early thirteenth century 280
- 10.5 Details from Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants, 32–24 280
- 10.6 Bowl, possibly from Mazanderan, Iran, second century BCE 287
- 10.7 Mosaic Spandrels of an Arch 289

- 11.1 George Hewitt Myers, by Atanas Tasev, 1960 290
- 11.2 Safavid kilim George Hewitt Myers bought from the Arts Club of Chicago exhibition of carpets 296
- 11.3 George Hewitt Myers's book plate 297
- 12.1 Stucco panel; Iran, probably twelfth-thirteenth century with later restoration 308
- 12.2 Equine head ornament, axe head, handle; Iran (Luristan), tenth-fourth century BC 310
- 12.3 Edward Jackson Holmes with colleagues, 1928 313
- 12.4 Star tile with horse; Iran, 1310 315
- 12.5 Mary-Helen Warden Schmidt, wife of archaeologist Erich Schmidt, at the site of Rayy, Iran, in 1936 319
- 12.6 Salver with dedication to Alp Arslan; Iran, twentieth century 320
- 12.7 Large jar; Iran, thirteenth century 323
- 13.1 Luster tilework revetment in the tomb of Imam Reza, Shrine of Imam Reza, Mashhad 326
- 13.2 Luster mihrab dated A. H. Rabi' 11 612/AD August 1215 and signed by Abu Zayd and Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir, tomb of Imam Reza, Shrine of Imam Reza, Mashhad 341
- 13.3 Hussein Behzad Miniatur, Tehran 343
- 13.4 Courtyard-facing side of the dome of the Madrasa Chahar Bagh, Isfahan, with a now lost repair inscription dated AH 1342/AD 1923-4 347
- 13.5 Entrance *ivan* of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah, Isfahan, with surrounding blank surfaces prior to cuerda seca restoration 350
- 13.6 Craftsman cutting glazed bricks for the restoration of the dome of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan 351
- 13.7 Craftsmen arranging glazed bricks face down on the dome template inside the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan 351
- 13.8 Entrance *ivan* of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan, with the pair of tile mosaic carpet panels before restoration 353
- 13.9 Right side of the entrance *ivan* of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan 354
- 13.10 Contact sheet of photographs of historical monuments in Isfahan and Mashhad and the manufacture of mosaic tilework, including the Shangri La commissions 359
- 14.1 *A Survey of Persian Art* on the shelf in the reading room of the Department of the Arts of Asia in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 372
- 14.2 The Pahlavi crown worn by Muhammad Reza Shah for his coronation at Persepolis on October 26, 1967 and now part of the Crown Jewels of Iran 381

- 14.3 The Shahbanu crown worn by the Empress Farah for her coronation at Persepolis on October 26, 1967 and now part of the Crown Jewels of Iran 381
- 14.4 View of Pasargadae, capital of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty 384
- 14.5 Tomb of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty, at Pasargadae 384
- 14.6 View of the site of Takht-i Sulayman in northwest Iran 387
- 14.7 Excavations carried out by the Italians in the 1970s in the congregational mosque at Isfahan 389
- 14.8 Polonaise carpet published in *A Survey of Persian Art* 393
- 15.1 Narenjestan, 1952 396

Abbreviations

Works Cited in Abbreviated Form

<i>Surveyors</i>	Jay Gluck and Noël Siver (eds.): <i>Surveyors of Persian Art: A Documentary Biography of Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman</i> , Ashiya, 1996.
SPA	Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman (eds.): <i>A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present</i> , 6 vols. London and New York 1938–39; repr. 16 vols. Ashiya, 1981.
London 1931	<i>Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art</i> , Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1931.

Journals and Series Abbreviations

Elr	Encyclopaedia Iranica.
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Abbreviations for Archival Sources and Institutional Names

AIC	Art Institute of Chicago–Museum Registration Records and Archives.
AOA	Arts of Asia Foundation, Florida (after <i>Surveyors</i>).
DDCFHA	Doris Duke Papers on the Shangri La Residence, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Historical Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.
FSG	Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution.
HU/SNC	Stephen H. Nyman collection, Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University.
NYPL/AUP	Arthur Upham Pope Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.
NL/ACC	Newberry Library, Chicago–Arts Club of Chicago Records.
OI	Oriental Institute Archives, University of Chicago.
SLHA	Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawaii.
SMB/ZA	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin–Zentralarchiv.

SMB/MIA	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin/Museum für Islamische Kunst–Archiv.
DAI/KA	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Orient-Abteilung–Kühnel-Archiv.
MMA or Met	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
PMA	The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia–Archives.
PMA/EAA	The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Department of East Asian Art.
UPMAA	University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia–Archives.

Note to the Reader

For the sake of simplicity, the use of diacritical marks for Arabic, Persian and Turkish words or names are kept to a minimum. Vowels are transcribed according to the standard Romanization of Persian. Consistency was encouraged within each contribution, yet there are minor variations among chapters regarding the transliteration of Persian terms.

Throughout the volume, the term 'Persia' is extensively used, since the current volume is much concerned with the time before 1935, when the country name 'Iran' was not internationally recognized. The term 'Oriental' is used in some chapters, if it is linked to a nineteenth- and twentieth-century geographical notion toward the non-western world, covering not only the Islamic Middle East and North Africa but also Asia and Africa in general.

Unless necessary, Hijri (Islamic lunar) dates are not given. Some biographical dates of individuals are not given, due to lack of information at the time of editing the current volume.

As in many edited volumes with diverse topics, each contributor has been encouraged to observe stylistic consistency within his/her own chapter, while vigorous copy-editing endeavors could serve to minimize, if not completely erase, stylistic variations throughout the current volume. In the bibliography and footnotes, for example, some contributions prefer to follow the spellings of authors' names as they were originally published; others prefer to spell such names correctly. The volume opts for the US spellings, but some citations and bibliographical references follow the UK spellings, as they were originally published. Furthermore, some institutions, such as 'The Metropolitan Museum of Art,' use consistently a capital ('T'), while others use a lower case ('t') or interchangeably use 't' and 'T.' Since it is difficult to establish a satisfactory consistency, the current volume puts all 'the' for an institutional name in a lower case.

Notes on Contributors

Lindsay Allen

is Lecturer in Greek and Near Eastern history at King's College London. Her research focuses on the history and archaeology of the Achaemenid Empire. Her publications include *The Persian Empire* (2005) and articles on the history of collecting of Persepolis and the cultural reception of Persian history. She is currently working on the collection histories of Achaemenid sculptural fragments outside Iran, the history of decipherment and reception of Persepolis, and Achaemenid kingship.

Sheila S. Blair

shares the Norma Jean Calderwood University Professorship of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College and the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair in Islamic Art at Virginia Commonwealth University with her husband and colleague Jonathan Bloom. She has written, co-written or edited seventeen books and hundreds of articles on all aspects of Islamic art, with special emphasis on the uses of writing and the arts of Iran, particularly during the Mongol period.

Jonathan M. Bloom

shares both the Norma Jean Calderwood University Professorship of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College and the Hamad bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of Islamic Art at Virginia Commonwealth University with his wife and colleague, Sheila S. Blair. With Sheila Blair, he has edited four volumes of proceedings of the Hamad bin Khalifa Biennial Symposium of Islamic Art, as well as the three-volume *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture* (2009), which won the 2010 World Book of the Year Prize from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Talinn Grigor

(Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2005) is Professor of Art History at the University of California, Davis. Her research concentrates on the cross-pollination of architecture and (post)colonial politics, focused on Iran and India. Her publications include: *Building Iran: Modernism, Architecture, and National Heritage under the Pahlavi Monarchs* (2009); *Contemporary Iranian Visual Culture and Arts: Street, Studio, and Exile* (2014); and *Persian Kingship and Architecture: Strategies of Power in Iran from the Achaemenids to the Pahlavis* (2015; co-edited with Sussan Babaie).

Robert Hillenbrand

is Professor Emeritus of Islamic Art at the University of Edinburgh and Professor of Art History at the University of St Andrews. He has written/edited some twenty books, including the prize-winning *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (1994), and more than 170 articles on various aspects of Islamic art, with particular attention to architecture, manuscript painting and iconography.

Yuka Kadoi

(Ph.D., University of Edinburgh, 2005) specializes in the cross-cultural exchanges of objects, ideas, and images in pre-modern Islamic Eurasia, and researches aspects of Persian art historiography in the early twentieth century. With the dual background of Islamic and East Asian art histories, she has written, edited or co-edited numerous books and articles, including *Islamic Chinoiserie: The Art of Mongol Iran* (2009), *The Shaping of Persian Art: Collections and Interpretations of the Art of Islamic Iran and Central Asia* (2013; co-edited with Iván Szántó), and *Jades from Eastern Lands: The Al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait* (forthcoming).

Sumru Belger Krody

is Senior Curator at the George Washington University Museum and the Textile Museum. Her research interest is late antique and Islamic textiles with special focus on the impact of techniques and structures on artistic, social, and economic power of textiles. Over the years, she has presented many lectures in public and scholarly forums, has written many articles on textile arts, has curated numerous Textile Museum exhibitions, and has authored/co-authored four books to accompany some of her major exhibitions. She received her B.A. and her M.A. in Classical Archaeology from Istanbul University and the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, respectively.

Judith A. Lerner

is an independent art historian and Research Associate at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (NYU) specializing in the art history and archaeology of Iran and Central Asia, with an emphasis on the glyptic art of these regions during the Achaemenid, Sasanian, Hunnic, and post-Sasanian periods. Additionally, she is known for her study of the interconnections between the Iranian world and China, as well as the revival of pre-Islamic imagery in the art and architecture of Qajar Iran. She holds degrees from Columbia University (MA) and Harvard University (PhD), and co-edits the *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology*.

Kimberly Masteller

is Jeanne McCray Beals Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City. From 2002–8, Masteller held the position of Assistant Curator of Islamic and Later Indian Art at the Harvard Art Museums. She has curated many exhibitions, including *Echoes: Islamic Art and Contemporary Artists* (2013–4), and has written several publications. Masteller has also taught at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, University of Kansas, Art Institute of Boston, Ohio University, Ohio State University, and Denison University.

Cornelia Montgomery

holds degrees from Harvard University (BA) and the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University (MA). She worked as a researcher at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1960–6), and as an assistant to Arthur Upham Pope at the Asia Institute, Pahlavi University, in Shiraz (1966–8). After she left Iran, she worked as a researcher of Islamic art at the Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels (1976–84), and returned to the US in 1989. She has widely lectured in English and French, mostly on carpets, and has many publications, including “Phyllis Ackerman”, in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (2003).

Bernard O’Kane

is Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture at the American University in Cairo, where he has been teaching since 1980. He has also been a visiting professor at Harvard University and the University of California at Berkeley. He is the editor of three books and the author of six, the most recent being *The Appearance of Persian on Islamic Art* (2009) and *The Illustrated Guide to the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo* (2012).

Keelan Overton

(Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2011) is an Independent Scholar based in Santa Barbara, California. Her primary field of research is the late medieval and early modern Indo-Persian world, and her secondary specialization focuses on the documentation of Iran’s cultural heritage, the formation of American collections of Islamic art, the ceramic arts industries of Pahlavi Iran, and the refashioning of “Islamicate” space abroad. An article based on her dissertation is forthcoming as “Book culture, royal libraries, and Persianate paradigms in Bijapur, ca. 1580–1630”, *Muqarnas* (2016).

Laura Weinstein

is Ananda Coomaraswamy Curator of South Asian and Islamic art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She completed her Ph.D. in 2011 at Columbia University, where she researched illustrated manuscripts produced in the sultanate of Golconda in the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. She is the author of articles exploring Deccani manuscripts of the *Shahnama* and other Persian and Urdu texts, the reception of Persian manuscripts in the Deccan, and the dynamics of cultural exchange in Indo-Persianate societies. She is currently working on a collaborative exhibition of contemporary art from Asian megacities, as well as a reinstallation of the MFA's Islamic collection upon its return to Boston in 2017.

Donald Whitcomb

(Ph.D., University of Chicago) directs the Islamic archaeology program at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, University of Chicago, and is a research associate at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute. His doctoral dissertation, *Trade and Tradition in Medieval Southern Iran* (1979), incorporates unpublished materials from the Istakhr excavations and his own surveys in southern Iran from 1972–5. While a fellow at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, he published *Before the Roses and Nightingales: Excavations at Qasr-i Abu Nasr, Iran* (New York, 1985), a study of Shiraz from the Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

Introduction





FIGURE 1.1 *Cartoon of an ailing individual (Arthur Upham Pope?) being cared for by medical personnel, possibly drawn by Eric Schroeder, 1931–6. Digital Images & Slides Collection (AKP071), Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University (IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).*

Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art

Yuka Kadoi

I hope you were able to keep in separate cases and the pieces belonging to the Chicago Art Institute and pieces belonging to me personally.¹

For many people, the name of Arthur Upham Pope (b. Phenix, Rhode Island, February 7, 1881–d. Shiraz, September 3, 1969) is almost synonymous with the arts of Persia. Because of his dominant role in the shaping of perception toward the 5000-year artistic and cultural legacy of the country now called Iran, it is difficult to erase his name from our mind: despite more than four decades having passed since his death, Pope's eloquence in both lecturing and writing, perhaps if not his scholarship *per se*, as well as his charismatic character and turbulent life (fig. 1.1), keeps enduring in our imagination. Unlike a roster of Orientalists of his time with strong academic cliques, Pope was a versatile 'actor' or 'entrepreneur' for promoting Persian art in the original form of publications and lectures, and, more intriguingly, in his deep involvement in the formation of Persian art collections in Euro-American museums. Besides the objects he gave new life to as collectable pieces, an enormous amount of archival material relating to Pope that has been scattered in various locations—personal and business letters, invoices, loan agreements, just to name a few—reveals the most vivid picture of how he was a gifted player in the battle with his rivals.

While Pope can still be regarded as the doyen of Persian art studies owing to his unique role—he was once described as a *monument aere perennius*² and is indeed immortalized in a Samanid-style tomb in Isfahan almost as a saint³—it is also true that he remains one of the most controversial figures in the Orientalist movement of the early twentieth century. He can be characterized at best as the “B. Berenson of Persian art,” judging by his personal and business

1 Letter from Pope to Rabenou, November 11, 1926, NYPL/AUP.

2 Lichtenstadter 1970.

3 “Shiraz had its Sa’adiyya and its Hafiziyya, and now Isfahan had Popiyya,” letter from Richard N. Frye to Rexford Stead, December 15, 1981, AOA (quoted in *Surveyors*, 547).

relationship with a number of legendary art dealers and collectors,⁴ or according to the late Stuart Cary Welch (1928–2008), can be dubbed a “P. T. Barnum of Islamic art.”⁵ Oleg Grabar (1929–2011) describes Pope as a “fancy operator at some complicated edge between scholarship, dealing and collecting,”⁶ while Richard Nelson Frye (1920–2014) portrays Pope as “a controversial figure, although even his critics acknowledged his great organizing ability and persuasiveness.”⁷

To challenge this historical figure in itself is a real challenge. Pope provoked a great deal of criticism for the last few decades of his life, and the recurring question as to Pope’s controversial role in Persian art dealing was readdressed by the publication of *Surveyors of Persian Art* in 1996, a 680-page volume of the collections of biographical records on Pope and his partner Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977).⁸ As Pope himself admitted, he was not only a “surveyor of Persian art” but more likely to have acted as a “purveyor of Persian art” in order to make a living.⁹ Many scholars began to view Pope and Ackerman as malicious plunderers of Persian antiquities and took a certain distance from them, often despising and even cursing the then deceased couple. Yet the matter is not so simple that one can regard Pope as “an art dealer on a large scale,”¹⁰ describe him as “manic, driven, and visionary, by turns grandiloquent and picayune,”¹¹ look down upon much of his output as “repetition,”¹² or “too subjective to

4 “Arthur was, no doubt about it, the Berenson of Persia. 1925 was important not only because of that first trip and Reza Shah, but because of his pilgrimage to 1 Tatti. I almost imagine Arthur, listening to Berenson, deciding ‘that’s the life I want’ . . .,” letter from Stead to Payne, August 13, 1982 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 90). Bernard Berenson (1865–1959) is known to have been interested in Islamic painting, and his small collection of Persian manuscript painting is now housed in the Villa 1 Tatti in Florence. He made several financial contributions to Pope’s Institute and served as a sponsor of the 4th Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology (*Surveyors*, 92 and 419). For further notes on Pope and Berenson, see Kadoi’s chapter in the present volume.

5 Letter from Cary Welch to Rexford Stead, early October 1980, AOA (quoted in *Surveyors*, 170). Welch himself was perhaps the last individual who played a unique role in the development of Islamic art studies and collections more than just as a scholar or curator. After his death, his collection was sold at Sotheby’s in April and May 2011.

6 Grabar 2000, 194.

7 Frye 2005, 219.

8 For reviews on this volume, see Rogers 1997; Bloom 1998; Farnham 2004.

9 *Surveyors*, 45–46. See also Rogers 1997, 456; Muscarella 1999, 9.

10 Dusinberre 2005, note 23.

11 Wood 2000, 117.

12 Rogers 1997, 456, note 4.



FIGURE 1.2 *Ayoub Rabenou (in the center) and Isfahani craftsmen. March 20, 1939. Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Historical Archives Photograph Collection, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.*

withstand an ordinary test of evidence.”¹³ His multi-faced roles in the development of Persian art studies and collections are in fact keys to the understanding of the process as to how this discipline and this genre of art collections were established. Owing to his mediatory act among academics, curators, collectors, sponsors, and, above all, art dealers—in particular Ayoub Rabenou (1902–84; fig. 1.2),¹⁴ he left us the ultimate scholarly and museological canon of Persian art for subsequent generations: what and how to research and collect. Of equal irony is that, while his scholarship is no longer in the mainstream of Persian art

13 The point is made by Murray L. Eiland III (quoted in Thomson 2007, 311, note 2). According to Jon Thompson (Thomson 2007, 311, note 3): “I have always been puzzled by this poem [i.e. ‘Ode to a garden carpet’, supposedly written by an unknown Sufi poet around 1500; SPA, *New Studies 1938–60*, 1967, 3184–6] which appears to give insight into how the symbolism of the carpet was understood at the time. One day I was looking at it and noticed some letters in italics in the title: AN UNKNOWN SUFI POET. The unknown poet thus revealed to be A. U. Pope himself.”

14 Rabenou’s name and his activities are often remarked throughout the current volume. I am most grateful to Judith Lerner for providing biographical details of Ayoub Rabenou and his art dealing / restoration firm.

studies, the apparently outdated *A Survey of Persian Art* remains an essential in many libraries all over the world and still serves as the best photographic documentation of Persian architecture.¹⁵

This volume does not intend to follow criticism of what Pope did in the past, which has often been discussed in a rather subjective manner in the context of forgeries and looting.¹⁶ Neither does it repeat to set Pope's career in the context of Pahlavi ideology and nationalism, since such themes have been dealt with in detail by other publications.¹⁷ It intends to reassess the life and achievements of Pope in a holistic way, put his character in the particular historical and sociocultural framework of the first few decades of the twentieth century, and contextualize his professional career with scholarly as well as personal touches.

The historiography of non-western art is a topical subject in the current post-colonialism stance of art historical research. Not only Middle Eastern art, both in pre-Islamic and post-Islamic times, but also broadly Eastern or Asian art became increasingly a subject of historiographical investigation, for instance looking at the role of art historians, archaeologists, curators, collectors, and art dealers during the formative period of scholarship and connoisseurship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁸ As the Parisian art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel (1831–1922) owed much of his business success of Impressionist paintings to the new world—"without America, I would have been lost, ruined,

15 See Blair's chapter in the present volume.

16 E.g. Muscarella 2000, 7–8; Majid 2003, especially 29–53. One of the accusations was the falsification of the *Andarznama*—arguably the earliest surviving illustrated Persian manuscript (mentioned throughout the current volume), and the intense discussion of its authenticity greatly ruined Pope's reputation. In one of the last writings by Grabar that was published posthumously, he states (Grabar 2012, 22): "my one long involvement with the manuscript of the *Andarznameh*, claimed to be the earliest illustrated Persian manuscript, would take too long to relate in an essay. Most of the people involved in it are dead and many of the most revered masters of our field do not appear in the best of lights. As a result of this involvement, I deeply believe that now in transparency in these and many other matters in today's world, even if I realize that the whole truth need not always be told." See also Frye 2005, 146–8, about his involvement in this manuscript. Frye concludes (Frye 2005, 148): "The whole episode of the manuscript left a bad taste and convinced me to leave the area of manuscripts and antiquities, and instead to concentrate on the early history of Iran and Central Asia." Another controversial Pope-related object is the MFA Boston Alp Arslan salver (mentioned throughout the current volume).

17 E.g. Rizvi 2007; Grigor 2004; Grigor 2009, *passim*.

18 Among historiographical approaches to East Asian art and archaeology, see Folkhausen 1993; Wang 2007.

after having bought so many Monets and Renoirs”—a number of paintings and art objects that accumulated in the old world gradually gave way to the emerging art market in the United States from the late nineteenth century onward.¹⁹ The shift of the center of the art market from Europe to America was particularly intensified after the First World War, and in the case of Middle Eastern antiquities a dramatic change of sociopolitical order caused by the decline of the Ottoman Empire further encouraged the migration of dealers and objects from east to west. The period between the two world wars was also a transitional period in the field of Middle Eastern archaeology: both pre-Islamic and Islamic antiquities became multifaceted subjects of study, not only under the mission to find the origin of western civilization,²⁰ but also as part of the process of evoking national and cultural identity in the former Ottoman-ruled Arab lands and Iran.²¹ Such ideological aspects of archaeological excavations inevitably affected the collecting practice of Middle Eastern antiquities.

Among the branches of Middle Eastern arts, Persian art took and still takes a special position, owing not only to its aesthetical quality but also to its complex historiographical background. The notion of ‘Persian art’ took a steady shape by the Euro-American movement of collecting the art and material culture of the Persian world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, intriguingly interwoven with the emergence of Iran’s cultural self-consciousness under the Pahlavi regime.²² Besides its collectable value, the artistic heritage of Persia began to be viewed as a key genealogical linkage between east and west, responding to the nineteenth-century trend in Indo-European linguistics and anthropology that greatly stimulated the growing European discourse on the origins of Western art, including Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941)’s controversial “Orient oder Rom” debate in Vienna in 1901.²³ After a period of experimentation—from the use of racially segregated labels, such as Arab, Turkish and Persian, to the introduction of the all-embracing term

19 See Patry 2015, 136. The saying attributed to Joseph Duveen (1869–1939) also rightly points out this phenomenon: “Europe has a great deal of art, America has a great deal of money.”

20 Goode 2007, 10. See also Vernot 1997.

21 Abdi 2001.

22 For further historiographical discussion of the term ‘Persian art,’ see Kadoi and Szántó 2013, 2–28.

23 Much has been written on Strzygowski and his controversial book (*Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der spätantiken und frühchristlichen Kunst* [Orient or Rome: Contributions to the History of Late Antique and Early Christian Art]). For Persian art and Strzygowski’s scholarship, see Grigor 2007.

'Muhammadan'²⁴—Persian art was by degree considered as “the most important branch of Muhammadan art,” an idea which was nourished by European scholars and collectors in the first few decades of the twentieth century, as reflected in the presentation of Persian art at the Great Munich exhibition in 1910.²⁵ This hierarchical mindset—with the arts of Persians, thus Aryans, on the top—may have been, as some scholars argue, derived from the lingering racial orientation of classifying non-western arts.²⁶

More than as just the prince who woke “the sleeping beauty of Persian art,”²⁷ Pope was certainly one of the influential figures who were credited not only for the patronage of Persian art in comparison with other branches of Muhammadan art but also for the establishment of a certain hierarchy within Persian art. He was, for instance, less enthusiastic about the modern arts of his time—namely, the arts of the Qajars (r. 1781–1925). This was probably because these were viewed as being too western, losing the essence of Persianess—“the influence of Europe in the nineteenth century but a calamity”²⁸—or as “bad mimics of the more ‘authentic’ Safavids (r. 1491–1722).”²⁹ For Pope and probably most of his generations, political upheavals in the post-Safavid eras gave “what seemed a mortal wound to the already dying art of the country.”³⁰

Within the field of Islamic art, the historiography of so-called ‘Islamic art history’ aroused a fresh academic interest in the late 1990s and early 2000s and

24 The term ‘Muhammadan’ (‘Musulman’ in French), with the focus of religious dimensions in the arts and crafts of the Islamic world, was, however, replaced by another, highly contentious secular umbrella term ‘Islamic’ over the period of the two world wars. Since then, ‘Islamic art’ does not refer only to the art of the religion.

25 Troelenberg 2013.

26 See Rizvi 2007; Korn 2010.

27 “... And we need to know what motives promoted the Dimand and Aga-Oglu and other impassioned hatreds. Jealousy? Fear that precious and traditional scholarly approaches to art history (Paul Sachs, etc.) were being vulgarized or popularized? Politics? And if AUP was indeed the prince who woke the sleeping beauty of Persian art, is the picture compromised by his dealer aspect? ...,” letter from Stead to Payne, January 15, 1979 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 574).

28 Pope 1925, 106.

29 See Grigor 2004, 42, which discusses Pope’s discourse on the Qajars, especially in relation to his Past and Future lecture (see Pope 1925).

30 Pope 1930, 17. See also the chapter on contemporary art in Persia and future prospects, where he opens discussion, saying “for more than two centuries now art has steadily declined in Persia” (Pope 1930, 245). Qajar art began to be incorporated into the art-historical narrative of the Islamic world only in the past two decades (for a historiographical overview of Qajar art scholarship, see Flood 2007, 35–38).

again during the past few years,³¹ and this phenomenon has been extended into exhibition topics.³² While many important studies have been conducted in the field of art historiography, the discussion tends to be centered on broad subjects as part of a special journal issue or volumes but is not exclusively dedicated to a single cultural domain.³³ Supplementing important volume publications, such as *Ernst Herzfeld and the Development of Near Eastern Studies, 1900–1950*—which singles out one of the most influential individuals in the history of Middle Eastern archaeology,³⁴ and *After One Hundred Years: The 1910 Exhibition “Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst” Reconsidered*—which reappraises the first international exhibition dedicated to the arts of the Muslim world in a wider context of both Islamic and western art history,³⁵ *Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art* aims at providing a novel insight into Persian art through the lens of Pope and his times. By looking at his interactions with various individuals, objects, and buildings, this volume intends to offer an overall view of the process as to how the very notion ‘Persian’ art was formed and articulated in the early twentieth century.

The present volume is divided into five parts. A historical context of Pope, Ackerman, and their fellow scholars, who were also on the scene of an emerging field of research—Persian art—is offered by Hillenbrand and Grigor from different perspectives. Part 2, which reconsiders Pope’s life and his contributions to several subjects of research (architecture and archaeology), consists of three essays by Bloom, Whitcomb, and O’Kane. Parts 3 and 4 focus on Pope’s role in the establishment of Persian art collections in private and public museums (Chicago by Kadoi, Kansas City by Masteller, and Washington, DC, by Krody), as well as thematic approaches to Pope’s complex relationship with collectors, curators, dealers, and colleagues (Achaemenid antiquities by Allen, Sasanian antiquities by Lerner, and Stephen H. Nyman by Overton). In Part 5, Blair deals with Pope’s legacy in the context of his monumental *Survey*, which defines the images of Persian art in publications, and the final part of the present volume is supplemented by a personal memoir by Montgomery.

31 Pioneering studies in the historiography of Islamic art were conducted by Vernoit (Vernoit 2000). See also *Arts Orientalis*, 30 (2000); *Museum International*, 51/3 (1999); and *Journal of Art Historiography*, 6 (2012). For France and Germany, see Labrusse 1998 and Kröger 2009.

32 The following are the notable recent Islamic art exhibitions with emphasis on the history of scholarship and collections: Paris 2007; Dercon, Krempel, and Shalem 2010; Labrusse 2011; Berlin 2012.

33 See Kadoi and Szántó 2013, which looks at Islamic Iranian and Central Asian art collections and studies within the framework of Persian art historiography.

34 Gunter and Hauser 2005.

35 Lerner and Shalem 2010.

Due to the enormous scale of the subject as well as space constraints, the present volume limits itself to cover some aspects of Pope's career. Similarly, his wife and colleague Phyllis Ackerman deserves a separate volume which should reveal her pivotal role behind Pope's Persian art enterprise. It is hoped that the publication of *Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art* stimulates further historiographical investigation into Pope, Ackerman, and other protagonists of Persian art in the early twentieth century.

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PART 1

Pope, Ackerman, and Their Peers





FIGURE 2.1 *Arthur Upham Pope photographing on top of a small dome of the Masjid-i Jami' of Isfahan, 1929. Digital Images & Slides Collection (1994.06578), Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

The Scramble for Persian Art: Pope and His Rivals

Robert Hillenbrand

This chapter is about a magical decade in the art history of Iran, the 1930s, and of the people who made it magical.¹ In a scant ten years, or so it seemed to an astonished world, an entire art-historical industry had sprung up out of the blue, all focused on a subject largely neglected by earlier scholarship, namely the art of Islamic Iran. The wealth of new material in almost every field except ceramics—where on the whole it was a matter of more of the same²—took both scholars and the general public by surprise. And it was a stupendous challenge to unearth, describe, analyze, order, digest, and understand this mountainous mass of buildings, paintings,³ and objects. Western scholars met that challenge bravely and, for the most part, successfully. And they did so with the minimum of intellectual support from the Persians themselves. There was of course no lack of educated and cultivated Persians, but their interests centered on the literary—history, philosophy, poetry, theology—rather than the art-historical aspects of their culture, which were not taught anywhere in the country's academic institutions. So Persian Islamic art—as distinct from the country's pre-Islamic art, architecture, and archaeology, which had attracted Western interest for centuries⁴—was a field that lay wide open to study. While

1 It is a pleasure to thank Nicole Chevalier, Massumeh Farhad, Donald Whitcomb, and especially Yuka Kadoi for the many ways in which they helped with information and photographs in the preparation of this chapter.

2 The craze for collecting Persian pottery had started near the end of the nineteenth century and had resulted in some well-illustrated luxury tomes, such as Henry Wallis, *The Godman Collection: Persian Ceramic Art in the Collection of Mr. F. Ducane Godman, F. R. S.*, 2 vols. (London, 1891–4), Dikran Kelekian, *The Kelekian Collection of Persian and analogous potteries, 1885–1910* (Paris, 1910), and Rudolf M. Riefstahl, *The Parish-Watson Collection of Mohammadan Potteries* (New York, 1922).

3 Here the defining moment was the 1931 London exhibition rather than a series of piecemeal discoveries spread across the 1930s.

4 This interest reached its first peak in the seventeenth century; see Roger Stevens, “European visitors to the Safavid court”, *Iranian Studies*, VII/2 (1974), 421–57. The whole topic can be pursued right up to modern times in Alfons Gabriel, *Die Erforschung Persiens* (Vienna, 1952). For a useful summary, see Josef Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia from 550 BC to 650 AD*, tr. Azizeh Azodi (London, 1996), 229–33, for more detail on the Achaemenid aspects of this process

there were indeed weak passages in the scholarship of those years, the 1930s saw the fashioning of a basic framework for the study of Persian Islamic art—and it seems appropriate to use the term ‘Persian’ here, rather than ‘Iranian,’ because in that decade it was the term of choice, feeding as it did into the romantic resonances of that term in the English tongue. That framework has stood the test of time, even though later scholars have not always acknowledged, or even been fully aware of, their debt to it. To short-change that framework betrays a lack of historical imagination; of course there is a gold standard of scholarship that transcends time and place, but it is inappropriate to judge the methods and practices of the 1930s by those of the twenty-first century.⁵ The pioneers of the 1930s had a solid, and indeed precocious, grip on essentials. They had vision, and they had it in spades, even if their grasp of detail was sometimes (and, indeed, inevitably) uncertain. And at the heart of the whole operation was a man-and-wife team: Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) and Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977). They had no children and, quite simply, they devoted their lives to Persian art. She specialized in textiles and iconography; he, not to mince words, did the rest.⁶

What triggered this outburst of frenzied activity? How was it that medieval and early modern Persian art had escaped for so long the kind of scholarly notice that it deserved? Why was the art of the Islamic lands to the west of Iran—Iraq, Turkey, the Levant, Egypt, North Africa, Spain—relatively better known? And why should this mass of information have come to light in the 1930s and not earlier? After all, Western travelers and scholars had been visiting Iran in substantial numbers since about 1600. These questions are more easily asked than answered, but a closer look at the political and scholarly setting furnishes some clues.

First, then, the political aspects of the phenomenon just described. Undoubtedly the key factor that changed the whole equation was the decision of Reza Shah to open the religious buildings of the country to non-Muslims. Earlier Western scholars and travelers had either been unable to enter them or had done so only very briefly, often in a covert way. They had perforce contented themselves with ruins or with isolated monuments, among which those of pre-Islamic date—mainly Achaemenid and Sasanian—predominated.

of discovery, see Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg and Jan Willem Drijvers (eds.), *Achaemenid History VII: Through Travellers' Eyes: European Travellers on the Iranian Monuments* (Leiden, 1991).

5 As is done on occasion in contributions to Gunter and Hauser 2005. Cf. the comments of Charles K. Wilkinson on this hotly contested issue (*Surveyors*, 170).

6 *Surveyors*.

So Persian art history at the time was skewed in favor of the pre-Islamic period in spite of the fact that far more had survived from later times.⁷ Moreover, Reza Shah's plans for modernizing his country included the construction of a network of roads that rendered even remotely situated monuments accessible to visitors using motorized transport. Reza Shah's pride in his country extended to its monuments and to its arts in general, and the help of Western scholars in making this heritage better known was encouraged at the highest level. Hence the generous loans from the Golestan Palace and the major shrines for the Persian Exhibition in London in 1931. And still other factors came into play. Iran, unlike North Africa and Egypt, and more recently the Levant, had not experienced direct or even indirect Western rule—though it had had its fill of political pressure from Russia and Britain. Nor had it experienced the kind of special relationship with a Western power that had so facilitated the work of Central European scholars in Iraq, Turkey, and the Levant. Compared to these territories, it was so to speak off the beaten track. And Iran saw in America the possibility of a pleasant change from the grasping self-interest of the European colonial powers. This favorable attitude was reinforced by the support which America, for example in the persons of Morgan Shuster and Arthur Millspaugh, had accorded to Iran in its economic troubles,⁸ and Pope—whom S. C. Welch dubbed the B. T. Barnum of Persian art history in the 1930s⁹—was a distant beneficiary of this development.

These remarks naturally bring the second theme, the scholarly aspect, into sharper focus. In the period from 1890 to 1930 the art history of the Islamic world, with the notable exceptions of Spain, the Maghrib, Egypt and India, was dominated by Central Europeans—Riegl, Musil, van Berchem, Ernst Diez (1878–1961), Friedrich Sarre (1865–1945), Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941), and Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948), to name only the most prolific of a dozen important scholars.¹⁰ The major works of Archibald Creswell (1879–1974) and Jean Sauvaget (1901–50) still lay in the future. *Stilfragen*, the *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum*, the *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat- und Tigrisgebiet*, *Churasanische Baudenkmäler*, *Kusejr 'Amra*, and Strzygowski's many works drove home this dominance. These are pre-eminently works of exploration; they document brand-new material rather than re-interpreting what is already

7 A rare exception is Pascal Coste, *Monuments modernes de la Perse* (Paris, 1865). Note, however, the emphasis on secular buildings, such as bazaars and caravansarais, in this book.

8 William Morgan Shuster, *The Strangling of Persia* (New York, 1912) and Arthur C. Millspaugh, *The American task in Persia* (New York, 1925).

9 Welch 1985, 28.

10 See Shalem 2011 and Hillenbrand 1991, especially 23–7.

familiar. Typical of the spirit of the time is Strzygowski's 1903 book *Kleinasien—ein Neuland der Kunstgeschichte* ("Asia Minor: a new area of art history"). The yearning for adventure and discovery, the staking out of a claim, the intellectual ambition, encapsulated in that title—and perhaps the somewhat arrogant assumption that what is of architectural interest in this huge tract of land can be creamed off quickly in a single slender volume—reveal a lot about what made many of these scholars tick.

Iran, sandwiched as it was between its art-historically better-known neighbors to the west, which were already relatively well explored, and British India to the east, where the systematic survey of medieval monuments had been going on since the 1860s,¹¹ was the logical new frontier. That its Islamic monuments had remained so little known was remarkable; it was as if, to change the terms of comparison, European art had been thoroughly studied but for Italy. For ten years or so before the outbreak of the Second World War, then, Iran served as the magnet for people anxious to carve out an academic reputation for themselves as experts in one aspect or another of its rich visual culture. They came from France, from Britain, and—above all—from the United States. They were in a tearing hurry; indeed, some of them worked as if possessed. To a man (and woman) they were amateurs and autodidacts. It is a fascinating exercise to try to recreate the atmosphere and the environment in which they worked.

What started the rush? The key event, briefly mentioned above, was the great Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House, Piccadilly, in the heart of London, in 1931.¹² Comprising over 2,000 objects lent by about a hundred museums and libraries, and over 300 individuals, and involving over thirty countries, this was an enterprise in the grand tradition of blockbuster exhibitions: huge and all-encompassing. In the pre-war generation such shows had proliferated, especially in London and Paris but also in other European centers like Stockholm and Vienna, between 1893 and 1912. They had become the principal means of extending and deepening Western knowledge of Islamic art. Persian painting and ceramics were the main focus of interest, and the catalogues of these shows steadily consolidated this process. This trend culminated in the great Munich exhibition of Islamic art in 1910, which displayed 3,600 objects and whose three-volume catalogue set new standards of pioneering and accurate scholarship.¹³ The Paris show of 1912, conceived, it seems, in a spirit of

11 For a full bibliographical survey see Creswell 1961, cols. 108–19.

12 Robinson 2000; Wood 2000.

13 Friedrich Sarre and Frederik Robert Martin (eds.), *Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst München 1910*, 3 vols. (Munich, 1912). For a multi-faceted

rivalry, and devoted entirely to Persian miniature painting,¹⁴ fell far short of this and in any case marked the end of an era. For the next couple of decades or so the war and its long aftermath, culminating in the Wall Street crash, made the atmosphere unpropitious for such grand cultural projects, though an exception to this trend was the Congress of Persian Art held at Philadelphia in 1926, with an accompanying exhibition—and already here Pope was the key figure, designing a prize-winning Persian pavilion.¹⁵ But the runaway success of the Burlington House show, and its huge media coverage, proved that the public's appetite for such exhibitions was undiminished. While there was no substantial catalogue to commemorate the London exhibition as a whole, only an *Illustrated Souvenir* of 101 pages, the section devoted to painting generated a classic publication, which for a generation and more remained a bible for specialists in that field and catapulted its study to a new level.¹⁶ Moreover, Pope had prudently managed to publish a popular guide to Persian Islamic art in London the year before,¹⁷ and while this was relatively long on generalizations and relatively short on hard information, it naturally became the *vade mecum* for visitors to the exhibition. This show was again the brainchild of Pope, who was also the moving spirit behind its entire organization and was identified as such in the *Illustrated Souvenir*; he was given full credit for the loans from Persian museums. Lastly, he was behind the bold attempt to bring Persian architecture into the exhibition by means of hugely enlarged photographs and a model, in full color, of the Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan. This caused a sensation; it was widely discussed and illustrated in the press, and suddenly the British

assessment of the impact and legacy of this seminal exhibition, see the contributions to Lermer and Shalem 2010.

- 14 Indeed, its catalogue, by Georges Marteau and Henri Vever, is entitled *Miniatures Persanes* (Paris, 1913).
- 15 The interest in exhibitions started early; Pope's first major publication is his *Catalogue of A Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets* (Chicago, 1926), a solid publication with 44 plates, 4 color plates, a 14-page introduction and 55 items, each carefully catalogued with the basic technical information provided.
- 16 Laurence Binyon, James Vere Stewart Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (London, 1933).
- 17 Arthur Upham Pope, *Introduction to Persian Art since the Seventh Century AD*. (London, 1930). The book is arranged according to media, and while these sections do not dovetail smoothly with the arrangement of the exhibition itself (*Persian Art. An Illustrated Souvenir of the Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House London 1931* [London, 1931], xv–xvii), they do correspond to the layout of the 101 plates (many of them containing two, three, four or even more images) that make up most of the *Souvenir*.

public was eager to hear much more about Persian architecture. Come the hour, come the man: step forward, Arthur Upham Pope.

Pope bestrides the world of Persian art history in the 1930s like a colossus. And that is not a mere figure of speech, for at six feet four inches—almost two meters—he had a commanding presence that gave him on occasion an unnerving resemblance to General Charles de Gaulle.¹⁸ A classic image shows him, incongruously kitted out in a Pahlavi cap¹⁹ and a three-piece suit, photographing on the roof of his beloved Friday Mosque in Isfahan, and clearly on top of his game (fig. 2.1). With the benefit of hindsight one can see that it was his gifts of leadership and organization, his eye for an opportunity, his marketing flair, his panache as a fund-raiser, his skill in public speaking, his indefatigable energy, his all-too-fluent pen, his resourcefulness in overcoming obstacles, his people skills, his mastery of the art of photography, and above all his vision and his personal charisma, which he retained into extreme old age, that created and maintained the whole complex enterprise that culminated in the mammoth and spectacular achievement of *A Survey of Persian Art*. And all was done on a shoestring.

But if Pope was the colossus, his colleagues and rivals were not petty men. Let us have a brief look at them. A key figure in Pope's own team was the Englishman Eric Schroeder (1904–71; figs. 2.2 and 2.3), a son of the manse who in the early 1930s was still fresh from reading classics and history at Oxford followed by travels in Syria and Jordan and some archaeological experience in Kish.²⁰ Schroeder was a man of many parts. He was a published poet—I remember Donald Wilber (1907–97) quoting an extempore line of his, uttered while they were travelling together: “Clouds as large as provinces march across the plain.” He had a natural affinity for the Islamic arts of the book, as witnessed by his classic 1939 article on the Great Mongol *Shahnama*—which was two generations ahead of its time—and by a later and deeply thoughtful piece on Mughal painting, “The Troubled Image,” while his 1942 catalogue of the Fogg

18 This height did not always serve him well; it is not difficult to believe that his lofty, confidently patrician bearing sat ill with a diminutive refugee from the woes of Central Europe like Maurice (Moritz) Dimand, a *nachgedunkelter Schrumpfergermane* who served as the first Curator of Near Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York from 1933, and whose bitter enmity made him a lifelong thorn in Pope's side. For the origins of this feud, see *Surveyors*, 203–7.

19 For the complex background to this item of headgear, see Matthew Elliot, *The Modernisation of Male Headgear in the Inter-war Middle East* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1998).

20 See the eloquent memoir of him by Welch 1969–70. I am grateful to Dr. Yuka Kadoi for sending me a copy of this.



FIGURE 2.2
Eric Schroeder in early middle age, at Alteoli's House, Kirman, undated. Eric Schroeder Papers, Archives Box 178. Harvard Art Museums Archives, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (PHOTOGRAPH: IMAGING DEPARTMENT © PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE).

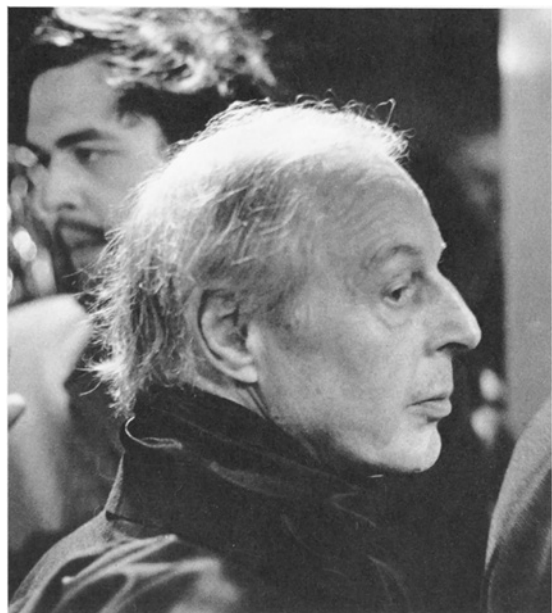


FIGURE 2.3
Eric Schroeder in his last years, May 1970 (AFTER WELCH 1969–70, FIG. 6).

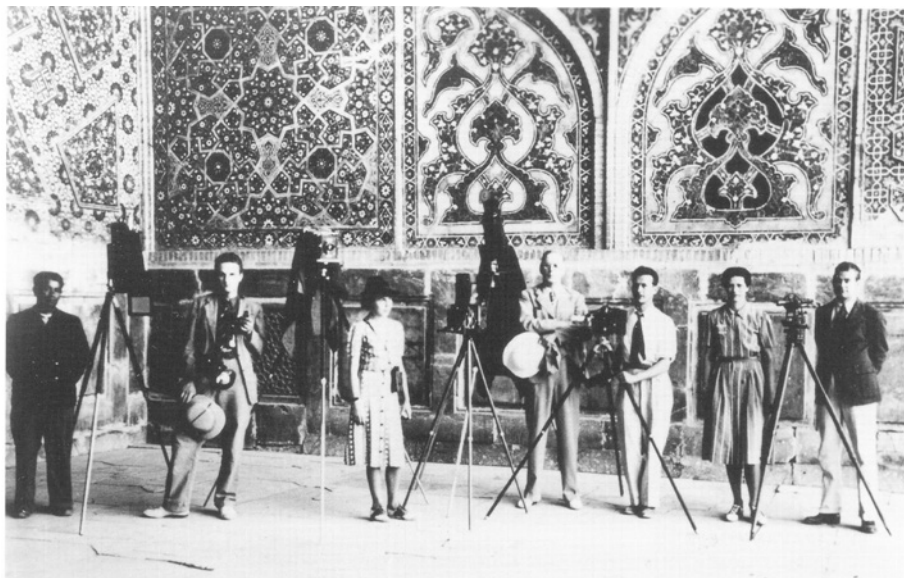


FIGURE 2.4 *Staff of the 1939 expedition in the portal of the sanctuary, Masjid-i Jami' of Isfahan*
(AFTER BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR PERSIAN ART AND
ARCHAEOLOGY, 6–7 [1946], 196).

Museum collection, a goldmine of a work, is alive with piercing insights and a continuous pleasure to read. His anthology of medieval texts, *Muhammad's People*, published in 1955, bears witness to his curious erudition and catholic tastes. He was above all an original thinker; every line he wrote on Islamic art is worth reading, and not only for his lapidary style, for he excelled in the art of getting to the heart of a work of art in only a few words. Much of his later life was devoted to a profound study of astrology, which achieved partial though posthumous publication under the editorship of Arthur Young in 1982.²¹

Also in Pope's regular team were several fellow-Americans: the architect John McCool (an accomplished draughtsman), Mary Crane (third from left on fig. 2.4),²² Otis Taylor (who later wrote a shallow and somewhat pedestrian doctorate on Ilkhanid architecture),²³ and above all Donald Wilber (fig. 2.5).

21 Eric Schroeder, ed. Arthur M. Young, *Zodiac. An Analysis of Symbolic Degrees* (n.p., 1982). For some of the background to this interest, see Welch 1969–70, 18–19.

22 Mary Crane, "A fourteenth-century mihrāb from Iṣfahān", *Ars Islamica*, VII (1940), 96–100.

23 Otis E. Taylor, *Architecture of Northwest Persia under the Il-Khan Mongols* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1939); but note especially Mujtaba Minuvi's translation of a celebrated letter apparently written by Rashid al-Din (*ibid.*, 39–40).

The latter had a degree in architecture from Princeton and had already accumulated significant experience as an architectural draughtsman, first in Greece at Olynthus and then, with the added task of recording ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, at Luxor. Indeed, Egypt was where Wilber first met Pope.²⁴ Wilber too was a man of catholic interests; he was to publish widely in the fields of Iranian history, politics, and carpets, and his early articles include, alongside many fine studies of architecture, material on Iranian folklore and music. For our purposes here his outstanding achievements were his history of Ilkhanid architecture (published in 1955)²⁵ and his survey of the Timurid architecture of Iran and Turan, written with Lisa Golombek, which came out in 1988.²⁶ His wife Margaret had studied art at Wellesley College and architecture at M.I.T. and was a gifted water-colorist; she too joined the surveying team (last two figures on the right in fig. 2.4; figs. 2.6 and 2.7). Wilber writes of her at this time as follows: "Peg, naturally, felt much affection for her parents. At last she turned some affection in my direction and agreed to marry me."²⁷ Another member of that team, in its early years, was Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970; fig. 2.8), of whom more later. And then there were the other scholars, not formally affiliated to Pope's enterprise, who were recording Islamic monuments in Iran around this time. A key figure was Robert Byron (1905–41; fig. 2.9), Old Etonian and aesthete extraordinaire, a veteran of art-oriented books describing journeys to Greece, Russia, and Tibet, who published ambitious surveys of Byzantine painting²⁸ and culture.²⁹ He was also a gifted photographer.³⁰ His most famous book was a bestselling travelogue on Iran entitled *The Road*

24 Their initial encounter was bathetic. Their rendezvous was in the lobby of a Cairo hotel, and after a quick visit to the men's room they went out onto the street. Here a passing Englishman accosted Pope, saying "Excuse me, sir, but your clothing is in disarray" (Wilber 1986, 22).

25 Donald Newton Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran. The Il-Khanid Period* (Princeton, 1955).

26 Lisa Golombek and Donald N. Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan* (Princeton, 1988).

27 Wilber 1986, 68.

28 *The Birth of Western Painting* (London, 1930); it was only the illustrations to this book that were the work of David Talbot Rice.

29 *The Byzantine Achievement. An Historical Perspective AD 330–1453* (London, 1929).

30 His photographs, like those of Eric Schroeder, are preserved in the library of the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. See Lindy Grant, David O. Morgan, and Denys Pringle, *Along the Golden Road to Samarkand. Photographs of Monuments in the Middle East by A. W. Lawrence, T. E. Lawrence and Robert Byron* (London, 1992).

to Oxiana,³¹ which includes acerbic but diverting comments on the scholars he encountered. Then there was the archaeologist Eric Schmidt (1897–1964; fig. 2.10), who made the occasional sortie into the Islamic period.³² Another scholar of standing was André Godard (1881–1965; fig. 2.11), who had trained as an architect and who, fresh from his archaeological experience in the French excavations at Ghazni in Afghanistan,³³ was appointed Iran's first Director of Antiquities. Unlike all the other Westerners working on Persian art in Iran at the time, therefore, he held a high official post, and one that impacted directly on their activities. But he worked largely alone.³⁴ It was he who founded the Archaeological Service of Iran, and began the Herculean task of drawing up a numbered record of the country's monuments. All of these scholars took to the rigors of fieldwork in an unfamiliar country like ducks to water.

Several contributors to this volume discuss Pope and his manifold contributions to Persian art, and there is no point in duplicating their efforts. But it might be worth putting *his* work and *his* approach into context by contrasting it with that of one of his most bitter rivals, Myron Bement Smith. As if by a conspiracy of silence, Smith's name scarcely appears in the 658 pages of the enthusiastic and admirably detailed account of Pope's life and work published in 1996 by Jay Gluck and Noël Siver.³⁵ But he was someone to be reckoned with. Smith, some sixteen years younger than Pope, was a fellow-American. He served briefly first as Pope's secretary, and then from April 1930 as the secretary of the fledgling American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology that Pope had founded to act both as a focus and as an enabling instrument for the very varied work on aspects of Persian art that he himself was mastering. Smith's work there involved "designing publications, arranging

31 Published in London in 1937. For a brief biography of Byron, see Christopher Sykes, *Four Studies in Loyalty* (London, 1946), 80–179; see also Lucy Butler (ed.), *Robert Byron Letters Home* (London, 1991).

32 E.g. in the courtyard of the Tari(k) Khana at Damghan (information provided by Dr. Donald Whitcomb); at Istakhr (*The Treasury of Persepolis and Other Discoveries in the Homeland of the Achaemenians* [Chicago 1939], 1110–19); and at Rayy ("Excavations at Rayy", *Ars Islamica* II [1935], 139–41, and Smith 1957, 218). See also his *Flights over Ancient Cities of Iran* (Chicago, 1940).

33 André Godard, "Ghazni", *Syria*, VI (1925), 58–60.

34 His wife Yedda complemented his interests by her expertise in ceramics, the arts of the book, and epigraphy. See also note 73 below.

35 *Surveyors*, 146–7, 172, 233, 240, and 300; the references to Smith are somewhat opaque. Above all, there is almost no hint of the serious challenge to Pope's work and academic reputation which Smith's settled enmity posed.



FIGURE 2.5 *Donald Wilber as Shaykh Wilber, during his residence at Luxor* (IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DARWIN PRESS, PRINCETON, NJ).



FIGURE 2.6 *Donald and Margaret Wilber at Pir-i Bakran* (IMAGE COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN).



FIGURE 2.7
Donald and Margaret Wilber by the expedition vehicle (IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DARWIN PRESS, PRINCETON, NJ).

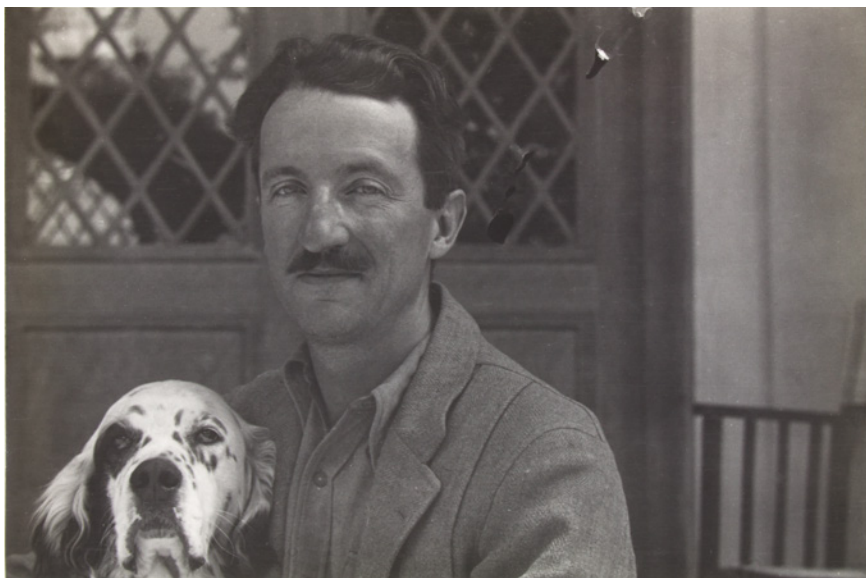


FIGURE 2.8 *Myron Bement Smith*

(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FREER GALLERY OF ART AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY ARCHIVES, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC).



FIGURE 2.9 *Robert Byron*

(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE COURTAULD INSTITUTE, LONDON).



FIGURE 2.10 *Erich Schmidt*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY
AND ANTHROPOLOGY).



FIGURE 2.11 *André and Yedda Godard, Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran. Baroness Marie-Thérèse Ullens de Schooten Collection (HSM UL95.04592). Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

lectures, organizing exhibitions and fund raising.”³⁶ It was not long, however, before Smith and Pope fell out. This was inevitable. Quite aside from the irreconcilable differences of personality between them, their approaches to the task of recording monuments were at polar extremes to each other. Smith was nothing if not a perfectionist; Pope was realistic about what could be achieved in the prevailing circumstances, and was concerned to secure the best value for money, taking into account the time and effort available for a given task. Sometimes that led him to make decisions that were pragmatic, but to others might have appeared opportunistic.

Smith was a Fine Arts graduate of Yale, and had begun an MA on the same subject at Harvard. He had also trained as an architect and classical archaeologist, and he took courses in Persian before he came to Iran.³⁷ He had therefore amassed a formidable battery of relevant skills. He had worked briefly in northern Italy on the brickwork of medieval Lombard architecture, and had published his results.³⁸ This experience proved an excellent training ground for his work in Iran, where he spent four years from 1933 to 1937 as a research fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies. He had an acute sense of turf and would tolerate no intruder into his chosen field. So he systematically excluded Pope from his bibliographies³⁹ and tried to create difficulties

36 See the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?uri=full=3100001-128368810>), home page (Myron Bement Smith Collection, circa 1910–70) (accessed July 21, 2012).

37 See previous note.

38 Myron B. Smith, “North Italian brickwork”, *Architectural Record*, LXI (1927), 65–74, 161–71, 257–63, 360–71, 441–52, and 521–32; idem, “North Italian brick chimneys”, *ibid.*, LXVI (1929), 57–66, 161–70, and 217–24, and LXVII (1930), 155–62. Cf. idem, “Nail studded doors from North Italy”, *ibid.*, LXVII (1930), 544–51 and LXVIII (1931), 155–62. But his interests at this time also embraced stereotomy: see idem, “Italian stonework”, *ibid.*, LXIV (1928), 225–34, 323–33, and 515–23 and LXV (1929), 49–56; and idem, “An analysis of Florentine stonework”, *Architects’ Journal*, LXXIII (1931), Part I: 193–4 and 211–15; and *ibid.*, Part II, 229–30 and 246–9. There is no doubt that this intensive programme of dedicated, specialized fieldwork and publication gave him a better preparation for his studies in Iran than any of his rivals (except Herzfeld) could muster.

39 Given that their interests were virtually identical, and that the 1930s were, in terms of publication, a prolific decade for Pope in the field of Persian architecture, this was quite a feat. It was therefore disingenuous for him to counter the accusation of animus levelled against him by Pope by thanking him fulsomely for all he had done to photograph Persian buildings and to make them better known—still without citing a single publication, not even the *Survey* (Smith 1957, 217).

with officialdom for Wilber.⁴⁰ Basing himself in Isfahan, he established a so-called "Expedition House," "outfitted his station wagon as a combination camper and research vehicle" (fig. 2.12), and worked with a staff which over the years included seven members.⁴¹ The resemblance to Pope's *modus operandi* is striking and surely not coincidental; he even wore the sun hat or pith helmet on which Pope always insisted.⁴² Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But Smith conspicuously lacked Pope's people skills. On his own team, the architect and the linguist soon hated him bitterly.⁴³ He was a pronounced eccentric; calling on colleagues on one occasion, he arrived in a thick fur coat which he refused to take off, and for good measure laid a thermometer on the table.⁴⁴ One wonders why. The story is told of how he invited himself to stay with some fellow-Americans in northern Iran, and on taking his breakfast on the porch the next morning he scraped the eggs off his plate, saying "That's for the dogs." His hostess took the maid to task, saying "What could be wrong? We have our own chickens and fresh eggs." The maid replied, "That man he here many times, so I give him some old bazaar eggs."⁴⁵

Smith's approach to recording architecture was emphatically his own (fig. 2.13). At the center of his activities was the Friday Mosque of Isfahan, of which he produced an inordinately large, detailed and still unpublished plan several meters long. This comprised many sheets of at least 50 by 65 cm and Chahriyar Adle, to whom Smith showed them shortly before his death in 1970, tells me that they covered the floor of the hotel room in which he was staying.⁴⁶

40 A letter in the National Archives in Washington, written by Smith to the American consul in Tehran, warns him that a certain Wilber was coming to Iran to purchase antiquities and have them smuggled out of the country, and that it would be advisable for American officials and others to steer clear of him (Wilber 1986, 40). That is certainly one way of dealing with the opposition.

41 Smith 1957, 218. See also note 36 above.

42 Wilber 1986, 76 and unnumbered pl. 22. But see note 19 above.

43 Wilber 1986, 39. The consistently wry rather than spiteful tone of Wilber's reminiscences inspires confidence in their accuracy, even though he had ample reason to dislike Smith.

44 Wilber 1986, 39.

45 Ibid., 40.

46 Chahriyar Adle writes: "they were I think about the size the French call format raisin: 50 × 65 cm (or perhaps the size demi-grand aigle 70 × 94 cm). Probably closer to the first one because he had the sheets in his suitcase. How many sheets? Hard to say: about 10?" See also Myron B. Smith and Katharine D. Smith, "Islamic Monuments of Iran", *Asia*, xxxix/4 (April 1939), 215: "An idea of the work involved may be judged from the fact that the finished drawing measures twelve by thirteen feet and that the greatest variation of the theodolite grid was four millimeters, or less than the width of a line on the finished drawing." This plan remains unpublished. See also Gluck's comment in *Surveyors*, 172, which



FIGURE 2.12 *Katharine and Myron Smith beside their vehicle*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FREER GALLERY OF ART
AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY ARCHIVES,
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC).



FIGURE 2.13
Myron Smith with a ground plan
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FREER
GALLERY OF ART AND ARTHUR M.
SACKLER GALLERY ARCHIVES,
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
WASHINGTON, DC).

There is something melancholy in such self-defeating devotion to detail. This gargantuan and ultimately fruitless labor—for he never published even a brief account of this all-important mosque—may be the key that unlocks his turbulent psyche. Smith was the prisoner of his own personality. He set himself impossibly high standards, and they shipwrecked his career. He began well, getting to know Iranian monuments at first hand and applying to them the meticulous observational and recording skills that he had already honed on the medieval brick buildings of Lombardy. But in time the balance of his work fell out of kilter, with publication falling far behind the frenzied accumulation of monuments for future writing up; indeed, he rushed around staking claims to one building after another in the manner of a forty-niner.⁴⁷ His eyes were bigger than his stomach. Not for nothing did more than one of his colleagues make bitter puns on his middle name, Bement, by referring to him *inter alia* as Myron Demented Smith. For Smith, the best became the enemy of the good. There is nothing inherently strange in this, and indeed many scholars (I include myself) rashly announce their ambitions to publish more than in fact they do. But most of them have the excuse of the daily grind—teaching, administration, museum duties—that can so easily fill the day. Smith did not have that excuse. His research fellowship enabled him to stay in Iran from 1933 to 1937; ten years later he completed his doctorate on Persian vaulting for Johns Hopkins University.⁴⁸ In that fourteen-year period his significant

suggests that at one stage Smith purloined Schroeder's plan of the Friday Mosque of Isfahan and published it without acknowledgment; but the publication is not identified.

47 Myron B. Smith, "Material for a corpus of early Iranian Islamic architecture. I. Masdjid-i Djum'a, Demāwend", *Ars Islamica*, 11/2 (1935), 154 n. 7; idem, "Minbar. Masdjid-i Djāmi', Muḥammadiye", *Athār-é Īrān*, 1/1 (1936), 175; idem, "The manārs of Iṣfahān", *Athār-é Īrān* 1, 1/2 (1936), 334 n. 2, 337 n. 8, 354, and 358 nn. 1–2; idem, "Material for a corpus of early Iranian Islamic architecture. II. Manār and Masdjid, Barsiān (Iṣfahān)", *Ars Islamica*, 14/2 (1937), 7 nn. 7, 8 and 9, 21 n. 46, 22 n. 48; 24 n. 57; 29 nn. 60 and 63, and 30 n. 75; idem, "Material for a corpus of early Iranian Islamic architecture. III. two dated Seldjūk monuments at Šin (Iṣfahān)", *Ars Islamica*, 16/1 (1939), 4 n. 26 and 8 n. 48. The grand total is 18 prospective articles. In this context there is a telling irony in the way that Smith himself notes that "a temptation exists to rush up and down the country "discovering:" monuments, snapping photographs in quantity, and attempting to "spot" dates" ("Demawend", 153, n. 1). The ill-natured dig at Pope is plain.

48 *The Vault in Persian Architecture. A Provisional Classification, with Notes on Construction* (2 vols.; unpublished; 216 pp. of text). In his introduction he rails at how "recent studies of the mosques, madrasas and shrines of Persia have been the work of non-architects, who, ignoring the essential problems of structure, describe forms from an objective [*sic*] and aesthetic viewpoint, with the result that, although impressive volumes appear, our systematic knowledge of the monuments does not advance appreciably. It remains to be

published work totaled three splendid articles in *Ars Islamica* on the mosques of Damavand, Barsiyan, and Sin, and the study of the minarets of Isfahan for Godard's journal *Athar-é Iran*, supplemented by short notes on Buzan, Na'in, and Muhammadiya and a couple of slight, more general articles plus a review of Creswell's *Early Muslim Architecture* 11.

It is on the major articles, all of them models of their kind, that his reputation rests. In 1938, just before the last of them appeared, he left Iran and thereafter spent most of the rest of his life, from 1938 to 1940, and again from 1948 to his death in 1970, as an honorary consultant to the Library of Congress. There he had an office in which he obsessively organized and re-organized his archive of 11,000 negatives and assorted papers, a task which occupied him for about a quarter of a century to the virtual exclusion of all other academic work: a prolonged and sorry anticlimax to a career that had begun so promisingly.

In all this time he made only sporadic sorties into print. Wilber's book on Ilkhanid architecture drew from him in 1956 a truly ferocious review.⁴⁹ By way of bonus he took an unmistakable sideswipe at Pope, referring to "American interest in the Islamic architecture of Iran, which began with such fanfare over two decades ago, worked up to the typographical magnificence of the *Survey of Persian Art*, and then petered out to its present trickle . . . The time is too late for further amusement of dowagers, nor is it enough nowadays to impress Near Eastern politicians . . ." ⁵⁰ This stung Pope into leaping to Wilber's defense, justifying his own fundraising and diplomacy in Iran, skewering Smith for his animus and plaintively demanding that when "Dr. Wilber has provided so much is it suitable, in the name of an imagined perfection, to demand more?" ⁵¹ Smith responded to the response in a manner that showed how they were both refighting old wars—and made sure he had the last word.⁵² Wilber meanwhile maintained a dignified silence, and indeed told me once that he had never read Smith's review. Wise man.

This melancholy tale of wasted promise and mean-spirited criticism highlights perhaps the strangest postlude to the heroic decade that is the subject of this chapter. For after 1939 the air went out of the balloon. An eerie silence

seen how permanent will be the damage to our studies of such non-professional publications. Nor can we yet estimate the extent of the confusion caused by preceding monographs by [*sic*] general surveys" (ibid., x). Note the barbed last word in that quotation. He explicitly exempts Godard from these criticisms.

49 Smith 1956.

50 Ibid., 247.

51 Pope 1957, 217.

52 Smith 1957, 217–8.

blanketed this once raucous field. Lethargy replaced activity. Of course this did not happen overnight. Pope, indefatigable as ever, mounted a great Iranian exhibition in New York in 1940, clearly intended to rival the London show of 1931—though significantly enough it failed to do so.⁵³ Wilber dubbed it “an artistic triumph but a financial disaster.”⁵⁴ In 1941 *Ars Islamica* devoted an entire issue to reviews of *A Survey of Persian Art*. This was unprecedented, and is a measure of the huge and immediate impact that these volumes had on the scholarly world.⁵⁵ And later in the decade, in 1946 and 1949 respectively, came the final issues of Pope’s *Bulletin* (now belatedly renamed *Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian [not ‘Persian’] Art and Archaeology*) and Godard’s *Athar-é Iran*.⁵⁶ But these closing numbers for the most part recorded research done in the 1930s and can therefore be regarded as a coda for that decade of work. They do not herald a resumption of activity. Indeed, one can almost hear the clang as the gates shut for good and business is suspended. It took *Ars Islamica* another dozen years to publish a substantial article (other than notes or reviews) devoted to Iranian architecture. And that article, by Godard, was a rehash of long-familiar arguments.

So the question insistently poses itself: what happened? After all, none of the principals died—except Robert Byron. The basic answer to that question can be summarized in three words: politics, money and overkill. Let us explore each of these in turn. First, then, politics. Naturally the Second World War had a lot to do with it. In its course Reza Shah died, and with him died the climate of official support and co-operation that had provided some fourteen Institute expeditions⁵⁷ with indispensable information, facilities and protection. Moreover, by 1945, as everyone knows, the wider world had changed. Colonialism in all its forms (including cultural colonialism) had become comprehensively discredited. Iran was beginning to flex its muscles against the West. One thinks here of the contrast with the immediately preceding period, in which the devoted work and deep knowledge of virtually invisible Persians underpinned the publications of their Western colleagues. The altered political

53 The catalogue, though long (562+xiv pages) is disappointingly thin; clearly funds and energy alike were in short supply (Ackerman 1940).

54 Wilber 1986, 99.

55 Pope’s often anguished portmanteau response to the critics smacks at times of an *apologia pro vita sua*: Pope 1942, 169–71.

56 Since Godard stayed in post for well over a decade after this, the early demise of this journal is puzzling. Godard himself published virtually no new material after 1949, and indeed the last fascicle of *Athar-é Iran* gives a pervasive impression of tidying up loose ends.

57 Elsewhere Pope lists this figure as 17 (“The Institute in War-time”, *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute* vi/1–4, vii/1 [1946], 1).

climate meant that many would now perceive something predatory in foreign expeditions to record Iranian monuments and uncover Iranian antiquities. Parallels with the situation after 1979 are not just easy to find; they are insistent. This kind of work by Westerners in the Middle East has always had a political dimension, even if that dimension sometimes seems to be in abeyance.

Next, in the era after 1939 one should also reckon with a bleaker economic climate. As Pope put it in 1958, "The post-war-time environment, unfavourable to spacious and humane projects, continued to retard the completion of the *Survey* programme."⁵⁸ He himself was constrained to widen the scope of his Persian or Iranian Institute to become the Asia Institute, and even so it bombed. For what the 1930s had conspicuously failed to do was to create permanent jobs in the field. Boom was followed by bust. In modern parlance, the Persian art industry of the 1930s had been fuelled by soft money. So most of the principals of that industry—one thinks here of Pope, Ackerman, Smith, Wilber, Schroeder—had to make a living in some other way now that the framework for old-style expeditions and surveys had been dismantled. These economic imperatives go far to explain the dramatic falling-off in publication after 1939. Godard alone continued in office as Director of the National Museum of Iran (whose building he had himself designed), yet he too remained strikingly unproductive after 1949, being content until his death in 1965 to recycle ideas and theories that he had first meditated in the 1930s, and defending them pertinaciously against all comers. He presented a forbidding face to younger scholars and eventually returned to his native France; his baggage included a trunk crammed with unpublished material.⁵⁹ Perhaps, since he no longer had to respond to the stimulus of competition, he was content to rest on his laurels.

Finally, what of overkill? Here, a single culprit fills the frame: the modestly entitled *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present*. The indefinite article there is pure litotes. In a spiteful aside in his 1956 review of Wilber's book, Myron Smith acknowledged the debt the scholarly world owed "Mr. Pope for his enterprise in photographing and publicizing the architectural monuments of Persia." This acknowledgment is surely a day late and a dollar short. Sour grapes, it seems, had set his teeth on edge. But he had a point. For many people the illustrations still trump the text. Indeed, lurking behind the praise of the one is the disparagement of the other. That is not fair, for much of the *Survey* is still worth reading. In any event, those six fat folio volumes

58 See Pope's preface to Theodore Besterman, *Index to A Survey of Persian Art* (Oxford, 1958), repr. in Vol. VI of the 1967 reprint of the *SPA*, Index 1.

59 I am grateful to Professor David Stronach and to the late Muhammad Taqi Mustafavi for sharing with me their reminiscences of Godard.

(2,817 pages,⁶⁰ 1,482 pages of plates, and 1,966 text illustrations)⁶¹ still have a daunting physical presence. On publication in 1939 they cost £70 sterling at a time when the take-home pay of a nurse was £8 a month. So from the outset they were well out of the price range for individuals. They were for institutions, not for the shelves of a scholar's library, and that added to their mystique. Moreover, the work was by deliberate design encyclopedic in scope. It defined 'art' generously to include everything from music to coins, from costume to furniture. So it had something—and usually plenty—to say about everything. It is entirely credible that an unintended side effect of this unique hernia-inducing work was to cause a catastrophic failure of nerve on the part of the next generation poised to continue work in this field. It seemed to close more doors than it opened. No handy reduced version of it, or of any of it apart from the bibliography, ever appeared. Of course it had its detractors, and they were voluble in their criticisms. But reviews are apt to be forgotten,⁶² while the work itself remains. The *Survey* (it is now appropriate to use the definite article), which was initially scheduled for publication in 1930,⁶³ then 1931,⁶⁴ was already then intended to plug a gap in knowledge, a gap that had widened immeasurably by 1939. But the work did pose the implicit question, 'what next?' And its impressive scale and length, entirely unprecedented in the field of Persian art, was profoundly disempowering. That effect even preceded its publication, for Pope was not backward in making bold claims for its comprehensiveness long before it was published.⁶⁵ At all events, the participants in the scramble described in this chapter who were not on Pope's team did not produce a book on Persian architecture—not Godard,⁶⁶ not Herzfeld, not Smith, even though all three were well qualified to do so.

In the field of architecture especially, Wilber's masterpiece aside, it was not until the later 1960s, again an era when foreigners were being encouraged to work on Iranian material culture, that serious work on a long-term basis

60 Pope gives the figure 4,300 (in the preface cited in note 58). He is obviously counting the plates too.

61 Pope 1942, 170.

62 For a fairly comprehensive list of reviews see *Surveyors*, 605–6 and Creswell 1961, col. 534.

63 See the advertisement reproduced in *Surveyors*, 299 ("two volumes").

64 *Surveyors*, 301, illustrates an advertisement for the *Survey* that appeared in the catalogue of the 1931 exhibition ("3 volumes, 25 guineas net").

65 *Surveyors*, 297–316.

66 Though admittedly he did produce, at the very end of his life, a book meretriciously entitled *The Art of Iran* (ed. J. Michael Rogers, tr. Michael Heron; London, 1965), which is largely about architecture.

was resumed, helped by the creation of various national institutes.⁶⁷ And the Congresses of Persian Art also started afresh after a gap of thirty-three years.⁶⁸ But all through the years of retrenchment, and indeed for long afterwards, the *Survey* remained the dominant presence in the art history of Iran.⁶⁹ Certainly it had its defects. It was both physically and intellectually unwieldy. It was neither a handy summary of its vast subject nor an entirely reliable and encyclopedic history of it. It was often uneven and premature. Its many authors frequently disagreed with each other, and no amount of editorial tweaking could disguise that fact. It had its serious gaps, such as Central Asia. But for all that, it has remained of fundamental importance, not just for its marvelous illustrations, and no subsequent survey of the field has seriously challenged it.

It is time to move from the micro to the macro, from biographical details to general reflections. What are the essentials of this hectic decade of uncovering at top speed, perhaps reckless speed, the prodigal wealth of medieval Persian material culture? Perhaps the most unexpected finding is that, with the exception of Ernst Herzfeld (figs. 2.14 and 2.15), one and all of the people discussed in detail in this chapter were amateurs and autodidacts, and as Constable reminds us, “a *self-taught artist* is one taught by a very ignorant person.”⁷⁰ Their academic backgrounds were mixed—philosophy, classics, fine art, history, architecture—but they brought to Iran scarcely any serious knowledge of the languages, history, or religions of the Middle East. Instead, they brought boundless enthusiasm and a commitment to the subject that bordered on obsession. They were wide open to new ideas and their intellectual freedom gave them a relaxed attitude to authority and a readiness to make unexpected connections. They felt that they had plenty of time at their disposal, and they could spend most of it in the agreeable and exciting hunt for new material. The undeveloped state of the field absolved them from the need to master a huge bibliography.⁷¹ Monuments and objects seemed to lie there for the taking.

67 This time the American Institute was joined by the British, French, German, and Italian ones, and in each case the scope of these organizations was wider than that of Pope's Institute.

68 And appropriately enough, the venue for the 1968 Congress was in Iran, to be followed in 1972 by Oxford and in 1976 by Munich. Since then, there has been no further Congress.

69 Cf. Blair and Bloom 2003, 152.

70 See his second lecture at the Royal Institution, London, on June 2, 1836 (Charles R. Leslie, *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable* [London, 1951], 308).

71 The principal exception was, as mentioned above (note 2), ceramics. Book painting was largely excluded from this scholarly stampede, since there was by now comparatively little material left in Iran itself.

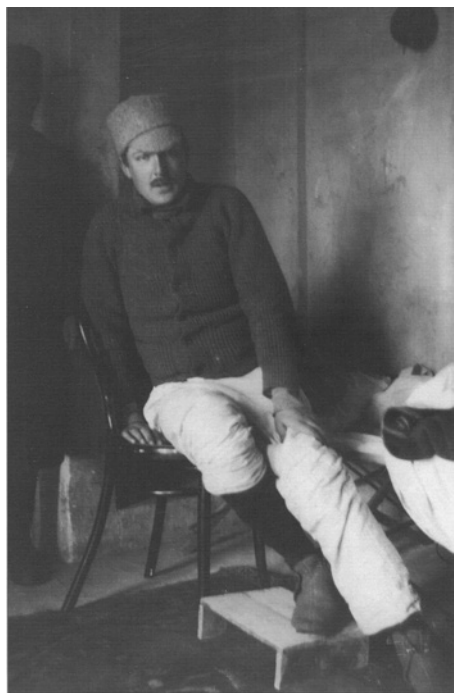


FIGURE 2.14
Ernst Herzfeld as a young man
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN—
PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ,
MUSEUM FÜR ISLAMISCHE KUNST).



FIGURE 2.15
*Ernst Herzfeld photographed in front
of Persepolis reliefs by James Henry
Breasted, Jr., February 23, 1933*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ORIENTAL
INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO).

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!

Nevertheless, in that heaven there was a worm in the apple. That delightful amateur status brought its own inescapable shadow: a pervasive if unexpressed insecurity. They were uncomfortably aware of their lack of a solid art-historical training, of the yawning gaps in their mastery of the cultural, literary, historical, and religious background so indispensable to a profound study of the visual arts of Iran, and of their deficiencies in matters philological. Pope, like his contemporary Creswell in Egypt, knew barely a word of the language of the country in which he spent much of his working life. Moreover, the pace at which they worked was unsustainable in the long run. The annual expeditions turned up enough material to last a lifetime. So they bit off more than they could chew. And who could blame them? They were the very first Westerners to be allowed free access to the country's mosques and shrines, and the subsequent history of decay, destruction and careless restoration of those same monuments has proved that they were right to seize the opportunity with both hands. It was not their fault that none of them held a permanent university appointment or a relevant doctorate, or that they had relatively few fixed points to guide them (and most of those were in German, scarcely the language of the moment in the 1930s). Nor is it fair for modern scholars to deride them for these deficiencies. The sparse references to the texts of the pioneering works of Diez, Herzfeld, and Sarre (especially Diez's book of 1923 entitled *Persien. Islamische Baukunst in Churasan*, whose perspectives are much wider than that title suggests) speak volumes. Nor were there handbooks to consult.

Small wonder, then, that they worked so hard, published so rapidly and operated in a kind of self-imposed intellectual vacuum that roused the ire of mainstream Western art historians like Meyer Schapiro,⁷² whose careers had developed within a totally different, much more heavily populated and carefully policed academic environment. True, article after article was published, mostly in journals that they themselves founded and ran, such as the *Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology* and *Athar-é Iran*, but some of these articles were shallow and many dealt with only some aspects of the monuments in question. Detailed, substantial monographs, the fruit of mature consideration and experience, were notably absent. It might be argued, in fairness, that the *Survey* itself contained several monographs, mostly by Pope himself, on ceramics, on carpets, on ornament, and on post-Seljuk architecture. But none of these have the range and depth of Wilber's book of 1955

72 Yet his review of the *Survey* is perhaps the best of the lot; it is at once penetrating and objective and spotlights some of the basic weaknesses of the work (Schapiro 1941).

on Ilkhanid architecture, which is a work of truly professional standard that elegantly digests years of dedicated fieldwork; it disdains easy fixes and facile generalizations. Schroeder never wrote the extended monograph for which his abundant talents fitted him, though his catalogue of the Fogg paintings, as already noted, is notably learned and full of stimulating asides and precious insights that suddenly shed a flood of light on an intractable problem. But this book was produced in a small print run and at an unpropitious time, and these external circumstances robbed it of the impact it so richly deserved. As for Pope's and Godard's books published in the early 1960s, and devoted respectively to Persian architecture and the art of Iran, they are frankly disappointing. Both men were well over 80 by then. The title of Godard's book is a gross misnomer, for he has little to say on any of the arts of Iran except architecture, and the book contains too little that is new. As for Pope's *Persian Architecture*, the text is by turns vague, turgid, slipshod and merely adjectival. It is unworthy of the man who wrote on architecture in *A Survey of Persian Art*.

It was the pervasive lack of certain types of competence that accounts for the somewhat ghostly presence of native Persian scholars, for the most part kept well in the background but—especially in the case of Mujtaba Minuvi—frequently appealed to in the footnotes of the *Survey* as the authority of last resort. Farajollah Bazl and Muhammad Taqi Mustafavi furnish other instances; nor should one forget Ustad Mu'arrifi, the much-respected master mason in Isfahan on whose expertise both Godard and Pope drew extensively. To put it succinctly, then, amateur status had distinct disadvantages, and these were embarrassingly spotlighted by the mere presence in Iran of Ernst Herzfeld, an *über*-polymath whose authority is invoked in groveling terms in many a self-abasing footnote. Herzfeld kept himself aloof from the art-historical arms race that was going on right in front of his eyes. It is not entirely clear whether the absence of a substantial contribution by him to the *Survey*—he wrote only a short chapter on pre-historic Iran—should be laid at his own door or at Pope's, but either way it was a pity. He would have put to shame with equal ease Friedrich Wachtsmuth on the Achaemenids, Oskar Reuther on the Sasanians, and even Schroeder on the Seljuks. Nor was Herzfeld the only such casualty. German scholarship was somewhat poorly represented, even though Ernst Kühnel (1882–1964) was allocated a key chapter on Persian painting, through whose enchanted landscape he conducted a well-disciplined route march. This is perhaps the most seriously dated major contribution to the *Survey* in the Islamic period, and one reads it with mounting dismay. Diez and Sarre were tossed mere scraps, while Kurt Erdmann (1901–64) was ignored entirely—and it is telling that Pope wrote of Erdmann's review of the section on carpets that his “exceptionably able account of the history of carpets takes up ninety-four pages with not a word wasted.” Perhaps he, rather than Pope, should have

written that chapter in the first place. The French scholars Sauvaget and Albert Gabriel, both of whom had worked in Iran, were also excluded. André Godard wrote sections of solid worth on the Gunbad-i Qabus and the tomb of Öljeitü at Sultaniya but ended up writing nothing meatier than this—though it seems that he was offered (and declined) the commission of writing the section on pre-Mongol architecture. His resentment against Pope and his team comes out hot and strong in his review of the chapters on Islamic architecture in the *Survey*, which is by turns carping, shallow, and dogmatic, and whose furious tone is little short of disgraceful.⁷³

Yet Pope gave himself hundreds and hundreds of pages to write on all manner of subjects—almost all of post-Seljuk architecture, plus long chapters on architectural ornament, ceramics, carpets; other chapters on the significance of Persian art, the relation between geography and art in Iran, an introduction to Iranian architecture, tents, and pavilions; and he also co-authored sections on ornament, city plans, gardens, and pre-Achaemenid animal styles. By any rational standard, then, he cast his net far too wide for himself and far too narrowly for others. And he paid for it big time when the critics sharpened their knives. Moreover, much of what Pope wrote was stronger on aesthetics, as he conceived that term, than on solid information, and the dogmatic opinions he constantly expressed compromised his objectivity.⁷⁴ His wife, Phyllis Ackerman, also over-extended herself in the range of her contributions to the *Survey*. Husband and wife alike wrote at unnecessary, prodigal length on too many subjects. Together they wrote about half of its 2,800 pages of text. That is simply greedy.⁷⁵

All this leads to a vexed topic, and one that determined the title of this chapter. It could broadly be termed atmosphere. In what spirit was all this research conducted? In that easy, amicable, live and let live atmosphere of collegial discourse and civilized debate that academe ideally fosters; or was it an unremitting rat-race, a case of dog eat dog? Unfortunately, it was the latter. Myron Smith

73 The responses to this review by Pope, and especially Schroeder, did Godard very considerable damage, for they itemised not only his lack of collegiality but also how his criticisms involved repeated lapses from accepted scholarly method. All this amounted to a public humiliation carried out with forensic thoroughness in the flagship journal for Islamic art; it may have played its part in Godard's astonishing lack of publication thereafter (the last two fascicles of *Athar-é Iran*, although they bear the date 1949, were dispatched to the printer before the war). He moved from feast to famine overnight.

74 Cf. the comments of Meyer Schapiro (Schapiro 1941, 83–4).

75 It is noticeable that it is Pope's work on architecture that has survived best; his work on ceramics and carpets is much more rarely consulted, and the same is true of Phyllis Ackerman's work on textiles.

inadvertently reveals as much in an anecdote in which he preens himself at having reached Takht-i Sulayman just before Pope's team, as if it were a race to the Pole.⁷⁶ Pope drew envy and jealousy to himself like a magnet. People were too ready to typecast him as the dealer, the fixer, the front man, the fundraiser, the circus master, and to scorn the remarkable range, fluency, and energy of his writing, despite its regrettable tendency towards grandstanding. But such criticisms obscure his manifold achievements. He had the instincts of an explorer and was an inveterate risk-taker. He was an impressive all-rounder as a scholar. He also created, almost single-handedly, an Institute that in a very few years had achieved marvels—not only the numerous expeditions across the length and breadth of Iran on truly dreadful roads, but also a library, a journal, a compendium of literary sources, events galore—and all the time the *Survey* itself, first scheduled for publication in 1930, was gradually taking shape. Scores of authors for its sections had to be found, wooed and managed. Money for all these activities had to be raised. The lavish level of illustration, including many hundreds of drawings which were the work of numerous hands,⁷⁷ was a severe financial drain. Pope could justifiably be compared with the conductor of a symphony orchestra, though he doubled as a one-man band. He seemed to be larger than life. He was everywhere, and he had his finger in every pie.

Small wonder, then, that he was the victim of a sustained character assassination that only rarely expressed itself in the publications of the time, but worked busily below the radar. The sale of objects was a particular target. He and his wife Phyllis were collectors in their own right, whether of ceramics, textiles or metalwork, and their lack of permanent employment condemned them to perpetual financial difficulties.⁷⁸ Not surprisingly, then, Pope used his wide network of contacts, such as the Rabenou firm, to steer Persian works of art, especially of the Islamic period, to collectors and museums, and he made

76 Smith crowed his triumph (Smith 1957, 218), but it was only Pope's team that actually published their results, and with impressive speed too (Arthur U. Pope, "The Institute's survey of Persian architecture: preliminary report on Takht-i-Sulayman. I. the significance of the site", *Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology*, v/2 (1937), 71–83; Mary Crane, "II. the historical documents", *ibid.*, 84–91; Donald N. Wilber, "III. summary description of the extant structures", *ibid.*, 92–105; and Phyllis Ackerman, "IV. the throne of Khusraw (The *Takht-i-Taqdis*)", *ibid.*, 106–9; cf. also Donald N. Wilber, "The Parthian structures at Takht-i-Sulayman", *Antiquity*, xii/4 [1938], 389–98). Smith's published contribution on Takht-i Sulayman is limited to a paragraph in his review of Creswell's *Early Muslim Architecture* II, which appeared in *Ars Islamica*, 13–14 (1948), 184.

77 For example, one of the drawings for Byron's chapter (*SPA*, 1141, fig. 409) was done by his father.

78 *Surveyors*, 158, 167, and 206–7.

no bones about taking his cut. The material included textiles, ceramics, stucco sculpture and metalwork.⁷⁹ The busy rumor mill sometimes tainted these acquisitions with suspicions of their authenticity on the sole ground of Pope's financial involvement with the deal.⁸⁰

And so to conclude. The 1930s showed how the energy and vision of a single driving personality could effectively create a new field of academic research. That decade also revealed the power of competitive publication, thanks to a clutch of new journals—*Ars Islamica*, *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, *Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology* and *Athar-é Iran*. There is no doubt that personal animus and rancor played their full part, and given the panorama of personalities on display that is scarcely surprising. Iran was not big enough for all the egos on display in this new field, whose material was so rich and enticing and seemingly just there for the taking. Of course there was more than enough to go round; but apparently that is not how it seemed at the time, and the outlets for publication were carefully policed. It is revealing, for example, that Godard never published in Pope's *Bulletin* and that neither Pope nor any of his team published in Godard's *Athar-é Iran*. Both journals had more than a whiff of vanity publications about them; for example, the husband-and-wife team of the Godards accounted for more than 86% of the articles published in the eight fascicles of *Athar-é Iran*.⁸¹ This was not exactly a peer-reviewed journal. Nor did Godard or Herzfeld channel a single article in this crucial decade to the one journal dedicated to Islamic art at large, namely *Ars Islamica*, where Smith published a series of comprehensive, formidable

79 Ibid., 151–70.

80 A typical if high-profile example is the Alp Arslan salver in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Despite passing with flying colors a rigorous technical examination by Dr. Harold J. Plenderleith of the British Museum Research Laboratories, who published his results in three scholarly papers over 70 years ago, the salver still has no more than a phantom presence in modern scholarship, even though no sustained, comprehensive account of the reasons for doubting its authenticity has been published. It remains tainted by the posthumous shadow of Pope, guilty until proved innocent. And there is still no appetite to attempt its rehabilitation. Meanwhile, see Plenderleith 1933; Plenderleith 1935; Plenderleith 1939. Note too the acerbic exchange between Pope and Dimand in the early 1940s: Dimand 1941, 211; Pope 1942, 203–7, and Dimand 1942, 209–11. For further evidence on Plenderleith's range of competence, see Gettens and Usilton 1955, nos. 31, 102, 124, 196 (on fakes and forgeries), 642, 764–6, 845 and 1180.

81 Of some 1415 pages in the entire run of the journal, authors other than Yedda and André Godard (namely Paul Pelliot, Myron Smith, Bahman Karimi, Maxime Siroux, André P. Hardy, Muhammad Taqi Mustafavi, Khan Malek and Mehdi Bahrani) together accounted for some 191 pages.

studies on Persian buildings. Pope's own contribution in this same period was limited to one slight note in the opening issue of that journal.⁸² Godard and Pope, and also Pope's team, are similarly absent from the volumes of Herzfeld's journal *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, just as Herzfeld did not contribute to either Pope's or Godard's journals. It is hard not to smell a rat here. One can almost see the sign posted above each journal proclaiming that trespassers will be prosecuted. These closed shops speak ill of the editors themselves. The gatekeepers of those journals, in short, ran them like personal fiefs.⁸³

But the love and admiration that all the players in this drama had for the art and architecture that they were analyzing shines unmistakably through their work.⁸⁴ And their legacy endures. Modern knowledge of medieval Iranian architecture, for example, has certainly been enriched by excavations and by a better knowledge of the contribution made by Central Asia and Afghanistan; but the tally of monuments unknown to scholarship before 1939 is modest. Modern scholarship on much of Persian art remains in the shadow of Pope and his colleagues; and the *Survey* is still the first resource for much basic information. Recent colloquia have honored Creswell and Herzfeld. Pope was admittedly a lesser scholar than either of them; but he was a much greater opener of doors, popularizer, inspirer. The long-term outcome of that decade of frantic activity was that American scholarship now challenged that of Germany, France and Britain. And *A Survey of Persian Art*, its reputation enhanced by two successive reprints, can in retrospect be saluted, warts and all, as its lasting monument. Nothing of remotely comparable scope has replaced it. As for Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman, they were rescued from genteel poverty by the late Shah and brought back with honor to their beloved Iran in the evening of their lives, to work in the resurrected Asia Institute affiliated with Pahlavi University, Shiraz.⁸⁵ They are buried together in a Seljuk-style monument on the banks of the Zayanda Rud in Isfahan. May the earth rest lightly on them.

82 "Some recently discovered Seldjuk stucco", *Ars Islamica* 1/1 (1934), 110–17.

83 For a very rare exception, see Myron B. Smith, "Imam Zade Karrar at Buzun, a dated Seldjuk ruin", *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* VII (1935), 65–73; but it was Herzfeld himself who added an epigraphical note (73–81).

84 Lorenz Korn has detected an element of racism (admittedly taking a positive rather than a negative form) in all this work: see Korn 2010, 325–6. Schapiro noted this too (Schapiro 1941, 83).

85 The Institute even had its own (short-lived) journal, whose title echoes its 1930s forebear: *Bulletin of the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University*, not to be confused with *Bulletin of the Asia Institute, New Series*, published from 1987 under the editorship of Carol Bromberg and still going strong.

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FIGURE 3.1 *Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman in their study, Asia Institute, New York, 1947. Digital Images & Slides Collection (2000.05400), Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

Gendered Politics of Persian Art: Pope and His Partner

Talinn Grigor

In 1925, two western scholars entered the Iranian cultural landscape, itself ripe to embrace them. They were to remain a part of it even after their death for, in the 1970s, they were buried in the heart of Isfahan. Throughout much of the Pahlavi era, American art historians Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977) and Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) devoted most of their professional lives to the research and publication of Iranian art, architecture, and archaeology (fig. 3.1). They helped shape the discourse on Persian Art as envisioned under the secularist auspices of the Pahlavi dynasty. Outside academia, their impact on Iranian art history was more profound than any other Westerner in the twentieth century, not only because of Pope's belief in Iran's superior artistic and racial status vis-à-vis the 'civilized world,' but also because of the extent and nature of his involvement in the country's cultural and political affairs. His career, moreover, began and ended with close relationships with both Pahlavi kings, who financed his scholarship and provided a privileged place in Iranian elite society.

In partnership, Ackerman and Pope wrote and edited the massive *Survey of Persian Art: From Prehistoric Time to the Present* in 1938–9 (reprinted in 1964 in twelve, then fourteen volumes). Between 1926 and 1972, they organized several international conferences and exhibitions on the artistic legacy of Iran, affiliated with the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology of New York, founded by them in 1928. Enlarged and renamed as the Asia Institute, it was relocated to Shiraz in 1966. Three years later, Pope died and was buried in Isfahan. The Society for National Heritage (hereafter SNH), under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Art of Iran, built their joint mausoleum in the historically and architecturally rich city of central Iran, Isfahan.¹ A mirror to their philosophy, the tomb structure was the SNH's last major project erected before the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty in the Iranian Revolution of 1978–9 (fig. 3.2).

1 On SNH (*Anjoman-i Asar-i Melli*), see Grigor 2009.

Persian art historiography was formulated in the first couple of decades of the twentieth century by men who saw themselves as instigators of change. Modernity and progress were premised upon exclusivist paradigms that, from the outset, barred women from its agencies and narratives. Any attempt to reconstruct the story of Iranian modern art and architecture, therefore, ought to attempt to come to terms with “the masculinist myths of modernism.”² This decoding ranges from the simple politics of naming to that of women’s agency and representation. Pope’s mausoleum and the *Survey* complicate these gendered examinations. Methodologically, the question is how to narrate Ackerman’s story, knowing too well that we have to fall back on the stories told and retold about Pope. That most of Pope’s papers, scrupulously collected by him over the years, are held at the New York Public Library and those of Ackerman are locked in a basement of the Asia Institute in Shiraz aggravates the unequal places relegated to each in art historiography. As a subversion of the masculinist myth, Ackerman’s feminism occasions the reconstruction of her contribution to the discourse on Iranian art and architecture. The fact that she neither adopted her husband’s name nor missed an opportunity to be represented enables this present reconstruction of Ackerman and Pope as, at least, equals.

A further complication is “the ‘problem’ of Arthur’s being a ‘scholar’ while also selling art.”³ His publications, conferences, and exhibitions from 1925 to 1977 were instrumental to the shaping of Iranian art history under the Pahlavis, but his role as an art dealer who provided services to the court renders his place in that history an uneasy one. The question is not whether Pope was or was not an art dealer, much less whether and how much he profited. This investigation brings to the fore the often muted voices that provide evidence for Ackerman as scholar vis-à-vis Pope, in an attempt to more accurately reconstruct their contribution to Iranian art history. A look at their relationship, a neglected matter, sheds light on the numerous histories that give no intellectual credit to Ackerman for her input. That contemporary figures, Pope’s own colleagues, were ambivalent of his scholarship is buttressed by his writing giving credit to Ackerman in their joint undertakings. It is useful, furthermore, to find out why such a foreigner rests today under a public monument located amid Iran’s most exquisite urban fabric. How can we narrate the story of Ackerman so as to reformulate our understanding of Pope’s practices? Ultimately, what can their

² Pollock 1988, 50.

³ Letters between Rexford Stead and Robert Payne from 1978 and 1983 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 573).



FIGURE 3.2 *Mohsen Foroughi: Mausoleum of Phyllis Ackerman and Arthur Upham Pope, Isfahan, 1972*
(PHOTOGRAPH © TALINN GRIGOR, 2007).

lifelong relationship to each other and to Persian art, as well as their mausoleum, tell us about the politics of patronage and art history, of the patron and the art historian, and of unequal partners in Iranian art historiography?

Pope, Tehran Beginnings

Invited by the SNH in 1925, Pope traveled to and within Iran under special protection of the state; this kind of royal attention became a standard practice thereafter. On April 29, 1929, the office of the Ministry of Public Instructions sent a letter to the governor of Isfahan: “the American Professor Pope who is a renowned expert on Iran (*iran-shenas*) is traveling to the area . . . assist him in his wish to see the historic heritage.”⁴ The next day an affirmative reply was returned from the Ministry of Interior of Isfahan. By May 1931, the governors of Shiraz, Isfahan, Mashhad, Yazd, and Saveh received similar instructions from the court minister of Reza Shah (r. 1925–41), Abd al-Hussein Teymurtash

4 Iran National Archives 290, Micro-reel 8, Document 75, pages 1–2; Ordibehesht 9, 1308/April 29, 1929, Tehran.

(1883–1933).⁵ In Tehran, in late April of the same year, Pope made his official debut during “the most powerful and profound of all these orations.”⁶ He presented on two occasions. The first appearance in the grand hall of General Asad Bakhtiari’s house, the later Club of the National Bank, was organized by Hussein ‘Ala’ (1881–1964) who had met Pope during his ambassadorship in Washington, DC. The lecture was translated into Persian by Mohammad ‘Ali Foroughi (1877–1942), according to Pope “one of the makers of modern Persia,” who later become Pope’s main advocate in Iran.⁷ Prime Minister Foroughi was one of the most prolific scholar-reformists of the Reza Shah era, who, among other important efforts, founded the SNH in 1922 and served as its director until his forced resignation in 1935. Moved by “such cataract of exciting and new ideas,” Foroughi asked Pope for a second presentation, this time translated by the future minister of education, Isa Sadiq (1894–1978), another devotee of Pope. At the Ministry of Post and Telegraph, he lectured to high-ranking officials, including Reza Khan, representatives of the parliament, the government cabinet, and the American community of Tehran (fig. 3.3). Focusing on the history of craft in Iran since antiquity and entitled “The Past and Future of Persian Art,” Pope argued that Iran’s modern political program could but center on its artistic reinvigoration. Like German orientalist Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948), Pope repeatedly called attention to the basic idea that Iran is a foundational civilization in global art.

For more than 2,000 years the whole civilized world, ancient and modern, has paid tribute . . . to the Persian genius for beauty. . . . This art of Persia has been the country’s greatest asset, it has not only brought wealth and prestige to the nation, but it has in all ages and places made friends for the country, and there is no civilized country in the world today [which] has collections of Persian art that shown to all who can see that Persia is worthy of admiration and affection.⁸

Artistic achievements were portrayed as measure of national prestige, and thus the revival of Iran’s ancient history was to serve the political purposes of

5 Ministry 2001, 400, Court Ministry’s correspondence in regards to Pope’s photography of Iran’s historic heritage; Ordibehesht 18, 1310/May 9, 1931, Tehran.

6 SNH 1976, 10.

7 Arthur Upham Pope, “Nine Lives”, the draft autobiography in process 1956–69 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 79).

8 Arthur Upham Pope, “The Past and Future of Persian Art”, delivered on April 22, 1925 in Tehran (quoted in *Surveyors*, 93–110).



FIGURE 3.3 *Reza Shah's Cabinet members and other high-ranking officials during a horserace event in Gorgan, ca. 1928. Central figure with camera is Court Minister Teymourtash, on his right Finance Minister Firouz Mirza and on his left Justice Minister Davar*

(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF PRINCE FIROUZ MIRZA FIROUZ BY THE PERMISSION OF SHAHROKH FIROUZ).

the state. In his introduction, Cyrus, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty in 550 BCE, and Ardashir I, founder of the Sassanian dynasty in 224 CE, were evoked as Persian heroes and the founders of the Iranian nation.

In a similar tone, Pope reminded his audience that “the voices of her [Iran’s] poets still stir hearts everywhere;” that Firdausi, Sa’di, Hafiz, and Omar Khayyam have in fact “survived.” He argued that while ancient “Greek civilization” was “preserved” and “transmitted” to Europe by the “extraordinary intellectual power” of Ibn Sina, “ravages of bandits, poverty, misrule, famine and ignorance” had “blight[ed] Persian art of all kinds.” As the speech unfolded, Pope made comparisons between Iranian artisanship and those of Rome, China, Japan, Pharaonic Egypt, Asia Minor, India, Seljuk, and “the shores of Europe” during various periods of history, concluding, “All the artworks of the world contain Iranian elements.”⁹ In praising the Achaemenid architecture, art, and artistry, he was surprised that “such brilliancy is not known to the world. Romans, experts in construction, did not know how to build a cupola on

9 *Surveyors*, 93–95.

a square base, whereas Iranians knew this technique.”¹⁰ Pope’s discussion on the Achaemenid architecture, relatively little studied at the time, could have also had much to do with the potential commission of excavations and sales of antiquity, hinting at his own candidacy for such projects. Elaborating on “the Persian genius for beauty,” Pope noted that “the architecture, painting, and poetry of Northern India were created directly under the instructions of Persian artists,” to underscore the idea that “nations and persons without art are barbarian.”¹¹

During this extensive address, Pope conveyed several politically current themes. He began, first, by glorifying Persian history, historical figures, and the spirit of the nation. He listed the “great art periods” followed by an elaboration on the “fundamental principles” of Persian art, although he confessed that such “full understanding” is “no small matter” for “such a gifted nation as Persia.” According to him, Persia is famous for her brilliant decorative arts. Advocating handcrafted works, he affirmed that industrial and mechanical inventions “often increase power at the expense of happiness, a cause of jealousy and strife. . . .” This emphasis on craft and ornamentation was deep-seated into orientalist discourse; while the sensuous and the decorative was fitting to the oriental context, the technical and the scientific was suitable to modern nations.

Pope soon moved to his next headings, “Standards for Judging Persian Art” and “Present Condition of Persian Art.” Making links between art and race, he noted that “the Persians despite the admixture of other blood . . . are still a gifted people,” where one finds “the same lively imagination, the same delicate touch that created marvels for Cyrus.” Influenced by John Ruskin’s *The Stones of Venice* (1851–3) and by Austrian art historian Josef Strzygowski’s *Orient oder Rom* (1901), Pope believed in the racial virtues of buildings, for architecture, unlike sculpture and painting, was “the work of the whole race,” “expressive of [man’s] nature.”¹² Continuity, despite historical calamities, remained possible, which, Pope insured, would result in the “return of justice and security and order.” Art was not only linked to racial valor, but also had something to do with public instruction, with the establishment of political secularity and social justice.

For this, the establishment of an art museum was essential without which “... no revival of Persian culture is possible.” The museum was seen as a site of mass instruction that would result in an appreciation for antiquity. In order

10 SNH 1976, 11–12.

11 *Surveyors*, 95.

12 See Grigor 2007.

to service the public, it must “be assembled in a common and public place” to “revive the spirit of the nation” and “awaken artists to new achievements” through which Persians “would themselves be astonished. . . .” As most of his colleagues, Pope hoped to revive an innate national spirit among the masses; one that was believed to have been forgotten as a result of Qajar apathy towards high art. Through the museum, this revival would guarantee a continuity of cultural history, “so that there shall be no further disastrous break in the artistic traditions of the country.” Above all, a museum would need a director, a post at the core of Iranian, American, German, and French colonial contentions.

Pope’s final headings, “Practical Measures for Revival of Persian Art” and “Wrong Views of Art that Delay Revival in Persia,” brought his narrative into the twentieth century, addressing the concerns of the reformists. Artistic development as vital political instrument was again emphasized, positioning the elite at the helm of that historical course:

If by instruction and by example these wrong theories that retard the revival and development of a real artistic sense can be corrected, then with the government’s energetic support of practical measures, the future of Persian art is secure. The claims of art on the attention of busy ministers and administrators may at first seem slight. Yet, art is a vital necessity of life for the nation. . . . The government and people together must do everything possible to bring art again to life in Persia.¹³

The wrongs that needed correction stem from an equally wrong understanding of artistic value in Qajar Iran. Pope’s emphasis on the nation’s artistic spirit returned in the form of cultural inspiration, the revival of which hinged on men with good taste. The Peacock Throne, in his view, “is only a copy made by Fath Ali Shah, who was an unqualified calamity to Persian art as different as possible from Shah Abbas and other great monarchs.” Pope stressed that the former “had no taste . . .” Fath ‘Ali Shah, held responsible by the reformists for Iran’s humiliating military decline, was positioned against another, the much-admired Safavid king, Shah ‘Abbas I (r. 1587–1629). This was a rhetorical tactic that Pope exploited, for his reconstruction of Iran’s history had found matching resonance with the nationalistic sentiments of his audience.

While under Fath ‘Ali Shah and his successors, the offensives on tsarist Russia and the British Empire had resulted in loss of territory in the Caucasus, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, and Persian Gulf, under Shah ‘Abbas, the Safavid Empire had constantly expanded. In 1598, he had recovered Herat

13 *Surveyors*, 110.

and Khorasan by defeating the Uzbeks; in 1624, he had crushed his rival, the Ottomans, and gained control of not only Kurdistan and Baghdad, but also the venerated cities of Najaf and Karbala. Shah 'Abbas had centralized the government, devised a working bureaucracy, institutionalized the *ulama*, subdued the tribes, invited non-Muslims to his court, and created a formidable army. In the domain of culture, he had moved the capital city from Tabriz to Isfahan and had made an artistic masterpiece of it by his ingenious urbanism and royal patronage; he had rebuilt and embellished the Imam Reza Shrine and had opened safe pilgrimage routes to Mashhad. In short, Shah 'Abbas had managed to accomplish what the reformists envisioned for modern Iran: a centralized, strong, and unified nation. For the Pahlavi scholars and Western orientalisks alike, none of the Qajar kings were a match for Shah 'Abbas the Great. In contrast to the latter, the former was blamed and belittled in Pahlavi historiography for backwardness, despotism, and lack of taste.

When Pope maintained that Fath 'Ali Shah's "grotesque and stupid carving of himself" in Sassanian style at Cheshmeh 'Ali "will remain as one of the greatest artistic scandals in the history of the world," he was reinforcing his audience's long held belief that the Qajars were a bad and tasteless mimics of Safavid rulers. It came as of little surprise when Reza Shah decided not to be crowned as king on Fath 'Ali Shah's Marble Throne or the Peacock Throne a few months after the lecture. Still, the stylistic imitation of the pre-Islamic architecture was precisely that which Pope promoted in his theories of good taste and national spirit. As a finale, he noted: "May the new renaissance of Persia that is now dawning usher in again a day of great artistic achievement in which Persia will once more delight mankind and bring honor to herself."¹⁴ As he finished his speech, Persian Art had made a full circle: from its glorious past, to the dark ages, from its present-day demise, and finally to the solution of a still glorious revival that was modernity itself. The speech gave the art historian the biggest opportunity of his career. Pope, single-handedly and successfully, made a place for himself at the vanguard of the discourse on Persian Art.

Reza Khan, sitting in the audience along with his ministers was moved by the responsibility that Pope placed on the state in reviving cultural valor among "every Persian." "The government must see to it," he said, "that as in the ancient days of Persia's greatest glory artists shall receive encouragement from the highest sources and be shown to the public for what he is: a benefactor to the nation [*sic*]."¹⁵ Convincingly arguing, Pope implored the reformists to restore Iranian art to its ancient standards. It was here that Reza Khan's fundamental ideas about artistic heritage were formulated. According to the

¹⁴ *Surveyors*, 110.

¹⁵ *Surveyors*, 109.

American architectural historian and an undercover CIA agent from 1940 to 1970, Donald N. Wilbert (1907–97), the speech resonated with what Reza Khan believed about Iran's past glories. "He became restless before the end, but there can be no doubt of the lasting impact of what he heard on the occasion . . . he was convinced that the heights reached by Iranians in the past must be scaled again. . . ."¹⁶ He not only recognized the political potential of art, but was also persuaded that cultural revival ought to be a political priority.

Pope's theories on Persian Art, delineated in his lecture, had much bearing on its formation and teaching in the following years. Translated into Persian, the speech was published and distributed by the joint efforts of the SNH and the Ministry of Public Instructions. According to Isa Sadiq, this translation was "for the use of teachers all over the country," written by a man who "first reawakened our own love of beauty by pointing out the significance of our accomplishment; it was [he] who thus promoted the understanding and appreciation of Iranian art and craftsmanship in all its forms."¹⁷ Pope not only shaped Persian Art, but also Persian pedagogy on art. That which he had to say about local artistic production was taught in Iranian schools in the following decades. For instance, in Sadiq's own textbook, Pope was extensively quoted, "Iran's service (*khedmat*) [to the world] consists of its largest depository, its most ancient, and most distinguished has been in the discipline (*reshteh*) of craft (*san'at*)."¹⁸ In Pahlavi historiography, the event was a pivotal moment in artistic rebirth where Reza Shah's "awareness" of Iran's pre-Islamic "great past was stimulated" by Pope's work along with the SNH that "owned much to his interest."¹⁹ Sadiq agreed,

The lecture . . . was a crucial moment in the history of Iran' self-awareness. . . . His enthusiasm and eloquence made a profound impression on the audience . . . [it] went deep into our hearts. . . . His statements about the significance of our culture and its influence upon other cultures kindled fires within us like magic. We became proud of ourselves. . . . The fruit of Pope's lecture . . . and his subsequent books and articles was a vast revival of our arts, historical and contemporary, a revival which continued throughout the reign of His Majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, then under the auspices and encouragement of H. I. M. Mohammad Reza.²⁰

16 Wilber 1975, 98.

17 Sadiq 1972, 3207–9.

18 See Sadiq 1957, 469.

19 Lenczowski 1978, 37.

20 Sadiq 1972, 3207–9.

Even post-revolutionary sources that tend to demean the Pahlavis corroborate the importance of the text: Pope's "oration created excitement," noted a book published in 2000, "and from then on particular attention was paid to the national arts."²¹ In the West, the revised version was published in English under the title "Persian Art and Culture" in the *Asiatic Review* of April and July 1928.²² This metaphoric cornerstone of Persian Art became a source of inspiration for local nationalists and Westerners alike. Printed, (re)printed, and cited time and again in the following decades, it resurfaced in the SNH's *Collection of Old Publications* (1972) and Sadiq's *Past and Future of Persian Art* (1977).²³ Each of Pope's points—from revival to museums, from pedagogy to Qajar tastelessness, from historical figures to nation's spirit—all underpinned the Pahlavi state's cultural reforms.

Pope's 1925 lecture in Tehran, addressed to the political elite of Iran, cemented a lifelong relationship between Pope and Iranian art. The event also bound Pope to his life partner, Ackerman. As a scholar couple, they would be profoundly invested in creating an entire discourse about Persian art and its long, uninterrupted history as such. Despite stories not written about Ackerman's contribution to Persian art, Pope was the first to admit her indispensability in producing that very historiography.

Ackerman, the Scholar

Phyllis Ackerman, born in Oakland, California, received her Bachelor of Art in 1914, Master of Art in 1915, and Ph.D. in 1917 at the University of California in Berkeley, where she studied under Professor Pope. Her dissertation, titled *Hegel and Pragmatism*, upset the academic community. In Pope's words, it was "a critical indictment . . . marvelous, brilliant!"²⁴ As his student, she became an assistant fellow in the Department of Philosophy and Aesthetics, where he "depended on her critical judgment then and on through their long life together."²⁵ Their student-teacher affair soon resulted in Pope's divorce from his first wife, Bertha Clark Damon, and compelled the couple to move to New

21 Mazaheri 2000, 291.

22 Pope 1928.

23 See Sadiq 1977.

24 R. L. Taylor, "Under the Rug-11", *New Yorker*, 21, July 21, 1945, 23–24.

25 D. R. Joralemon, "Arthur Upham Pope, '70-Fold Genius'", *To Live Strivingly*, Berkeley, 1979, 241–6.

York City University. Here, they collaborated on teaching a course on Asian ornament, focusing on Near Eastern societies. While iconography and interpretation was her area of concentration, aesthetics and history was his. From these early days of her career, Ackerman approached non-Western art with an interpretive method of study. John Walker, an authority on ceramics, remarked, "I must say she convinced me that much of the early ceramic ornamentation was a form of ancient language."²⁶

Many others were impressed by Ackerman's unique approach to artifacts. The following incident is a remarkable indication of her in-depth understanding of objects within their cultural context and historical use. Contesting the process that went into experiencing a Persian rug, she entered into a dispute with the director of the Frick Museum, Mortimer Clapp. True to the museum culture of framing and labeling artifacts on walls, he insisted that the rug was meant to hang on the wall and to be experienced "simultaneously"—as a whole. In unyielding disagreement, Ackerman held that it was, in fact, intended to lie on the floor and be viewed "sequentially"—each piece at a time as the viewer walked over or experienced the object. She assured Clapp that "you are confusing repetitive identity with continuity."²⁷ Ackerman was pointing to the repetitive experience of the object—the rug being viewed as fragmented pieces, while the viewer is in motion—versus a holistic gaze from a single fixed viewpoint; in other words, a more marginalized and feminist approach to the viewing of the object by its moving subject. Clapp stopped arguing.

Ackerman, like her "great pal" Georgia O'Keefe, wished to maintain an independent identity.²⁸ Therefore, Ackerman kept her name when she married Pope. This politics of naming has conditioned the authority of the scholar's voice. Ackerman was fully aware of this, for early on, under five different names, each using the initials P. A., she wrote reviews for major art journals published in New York, London, and Paris. Eventually she decided on "Phyllis Ackerman." Her first major work under that name, *Tapestry, Mirror of Civilization* (1933), traces the course of civilization through an analysis of the art of tapestry.²⁹ According to reviews, it was a "quite a brilliant production," "profound, important," "a magnificent piece of work."³⁰ A leading Russian sinologist praised it

26 *Surveyors*, 57.

27 *Surveyors*, 57.

28 Letter from Rexford Stead to Robert Payne, May 25, 1982 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 58).

29 Ackerman 1933.

30 *Surveyors*, 57.

as “thrilling, important, and true.”³¹ For decades it was the authority on the topic of wallpaper and its origin in China. In the context of Iranian art history, Ackerman was considered an expert on prehistoric myths and symbols and was the first to see the link between Persian and Japanese art. Her familiarity with Asian cultures, coupled with her rare approach to the subject, was to have a lasting impact on the art and architectural history of Iran.

The *Survey* was Pope-Ackerman's greatest contribution to the study of Iranian art, despite methodological shortcomings and the fact that when it appeared it was already outdated. There is little doubt that Ackerman's intellectual presence transformed the individual essays into what, seventy years after its publication, is still the only comprehensive study on Iranian art dealing with a wide range of topics from prehistoric architecture to modern tapestry and music. Ackerman was identified as an assistant editor in both editions, but she contributed much more than that title would imply, on evidence from archives and contemporary observers. Ackerman's nephew John Forbes conceded to her assistant and biographer, Rexford Stead, in 1978, “PA never did receive her due—how right you are. And the *Survey* is the No. 1 example, as you say.”³²

Others who had helped complete the project noted, “She had done more editing than he had done; she had been more than his assistant, she had written or rewritten so many of the articles that it bore throughout the trace of her muscular style.”³³ There was no doubt in anyone's mind that the *Survey* could not have been produced, even the second time around, without Ackerman's authorship. Ackerman also translated and edited entire articles written by men in French, Italian, and German, giving the collection “an authority it would not otherwise possess.”³⁴ The manuscripts of the submissions, held at the New York Public Library, testify to her meticulous corrections.³⁵ Another concluded, “To have proofread, five times, and checked 8,000 cross-references in Arthur's six volumes *Survey* . . . was proof enough of a marriage of true minds,” but unequal ones, for the 1938 edition appeared without her name on the cover.³⁶

31 Letter from Pope to Rexford Stead, June 4, 1946 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 61).

32 Letter from John Douglas Forbes, Ackerman's nephew, to Rexford Stead, December 14, 1978 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 64).

33 *Surveyors*, 58.

34 *Surveyors*, 61.

35 See *Pope Papers*, Box 5, Page proofs of the *Survey of Persian Art*.

36 D. Joralemon, “Arthur Upham Pope, '70-Fold Genius” (quoted in *Surveyors*, 557).

During the preparation of the second edition in 1964, Ackerman fought Pope to get her name on all twelve volumes. He had insisted that the appearance of her name would “only crowd” the spine, because “both names would not fit in the ideal type size,” adding, “Isn’t it enough that you have been handsomely credited on each title page?”³⁷ With the help of her student, Ackerman managed to have her name printed without Pope’s consent. After seeing it, he remained silent; she was pleased to see the ideal type size adjusted to give her due credit, even in the subordinate position of an assistant editor. This was not an isolated case.

The books which appeared under his name and benefited from Ackerman’s editing included *Introduction to Persian Art* (1930), *Masterpieces of Persian Art* (1945), and *Persian Architecture: The Triumph of Form and Color* (1965).³⁸ Published in 1969 and posthumously republished four times in the following years by Jay Gluck, friend and assistant of Pope, *Introducing Persian Architecture* was praised by Michael Levey in *Apollo* as a “concise introduction” to Iranian architectural history “of epic scale,” a work that embraced “concentrated authority, clarity, and appeal.”³⁹ In like fashion, Lewis Mumford described it as “a dazzling experience,” which “puts Persian architecture on a par with that of Egypt, Greece or our Middle Ages.”⁴⁰ A glance at the bibliographies of Ackerman and Pope reveals Ackerman’s superior scholarly caliber.

Whereas nearly all of Ackerman’s articles appeared in refereed art or art history journals, Pope published mostly in commercial magazines like *Country Life*, *Travel*, *Kayhan International*, *Tehran Journal*, *Mainichik Daily News*, *Times*, *Near East and India*, and the Soviet *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*. Among these, *New York Times* and *Illustrated London News* seemed to have been his favorites.⁴¹ The few exceptions consisted of *Apollo*, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the *Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology*, and the *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute*.

Ackerman also took a backseat to Pope during the numerous exhibitions and congresses that they organized. Opened against the backdrop of a replica of Isfahan’s Masjed-i Shah, the First Congress and Exhibition of Persian Art and Archaeology in Philadelphia was followed by those in London (1931),

37 *Surveyors*, 58.

38 In the *Art Bulletin*, Mehmet Ağa-Oğlu (1896–1949) ravaged Pope’s scholarship and methodology; see Ağa-Oğlu 1947.

39 Pope 1969, cover page.

40 Pope 1969, cover page.

41 For a list of publications by Ackerman and Pope, see *Surveyors*, bibliographic list.



FIGURE 3.4 *The New York Congress, April 24, 1960; Ackerman is standing at the center with the long dress; on her left stands Isa Sadiq (AFTER SADIQ 1959–74, 3: 351).*

Leningrad and Moscow (1935), New York (1940), and in 1960 in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC (fig. 3.4). The 1968 exhibition was organized at home in the three major cities of Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz. Pope made his last public speech during the Fifth Congress in Tehran. Only after Pope's death did Ackerman attend the 1972 Oxford Congress, followed by the one in Munich in 1976, as his replacement. The final congress scheduled for 1979 in Gent never took place because of the political turmoil in Iran. By then, Ackerman had been buried in Pope's mausoleum.

On a personal note, Ackerman told Pope in 1947, "I can accept the furtiveness, mendacity, evasiveness . . . but there is one thing I cannot accept, and that is the hypocrisy in our personal relationship."⁴² While privately, he referred to her as "sweetheart, dearest, beloved, my darling, dearest," publicly, he strictly stuck to "Dr. Ackerman."⁴³ Indeed, their personal letters speak to their respect and commitment to each other; Pope far more than Ackerman. "You have certainly covered yourself with glory in the architecture section," he told her once.⁴⁴ His support of her as a scholar went beyond their personal

42 Letter from Ackerman to Pope, beginning of February 1947 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 64).

43 See letters in NYPL/AUP, Box 3 Personal correspondence 1934, file "1937 Ackerman, Phyllis (Mrs. Pope)."

44 Letter from Pope to Ackerman, undated; NYPL/AUP, Box 3 Personal correspondence 1934, file "1937 Ackerman, Phyllis (Mrs. Pope)."

relation. "My wife," he wrote, "is also working to the limit of her endurance . . . and could hardly take the evening off merely to hear things that she knows just as well, if not better, than I do."⁴⁵ During the last stage of the *Survey*'s editing, when work was "piling up very heavily," he confessed to American architectural historian Donald Wilber, "She is staying here to see the *Survey* through."⁴⁶ In a remarkable letter to Hussein 'Ala', Pope not only praised her as the foremost Iranologist, but also insisted that where Herzfeld had failed, she had prevailed triumphantly:

I suppose you will receive a copy of the Indian Journal of Arts and letters with Phyllis' contribution at the meeting of the Indian Society at the Dutch Legation. It is one of the most compact and brilliant statements of Iran's role in Asiatic history that has appeared. I should think the Iranians would be interested. They do not know her and she is really—I mean it quite seriously—all in all the outstanding scholar in the field of Iranian art in the world today. Herzfeld, of course, has more intense erudition at certain points and much more practical experience in the archaeological and architectural field but Iran's achievements in art are far greater in scope and there are whole areas in which he is only an outsider and amateur which Phyllis knows well. I would like to see the Iranians get acquainted with her, at least intellectually . . . she has already reconstructed the great throne of Khosrau, a problem of which—confidentially—Herzfeld made an utter mess.⁴⁷

While at times it seems that Ackerman was a tool in Pope's self-promotion, it is very hard to miss his genuine belief in her talent as a scholar. This, perhaps, only goes to show that their relationship was far more complex than a reconstruction allows.

The joint efforts of Ackerman and Pope had a major impact on Iran's heritage discourse. They rendered the study of Iranian art and architecture available and legible to a new generation of scholars and the public, and instigated a discourse based on a pedagogical model that began with the Achaemenids during antiquity and declined after the seventh-century Arab invasion of Iran,

45 Letter from Pope to A. P. Black, head of Women's City Club of San Francisco, July 27, 1927; NYPL/AUP, Box 1 General correspondence 1926–1927, file "B."

46 Letter from Pope to Donald Wilber, August 25, 1937, London; NYPL/AUP, Box 4 Personal correspondence 1937, file "Wilb-Wilk 1937."

47 Letter from Pope to Hussein 'Ala', February 9, 1937; NYPL/AUP, Box 3 Personal correspondence 1934, file "A."

to be revived under the Pahlavis in modern times. This was a new historiography of Iranian art that was not only linear and based on Western paradigms but deeply national. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was a sign of cultural sophistication and modernity for upper- and upper-middle-class Iranian households to own the twelve volumes of the *Survey*. Often displayed in the living room, it came to replace the Qur'an in many secular Muslim families, while in non-Muslim homes it signaled national belonging as equally Iranian. Pope saw himself as a missionary in the formation of this new sense of national belonging, which he made clear to the reformist elite as early as 1925. For instance, apologizing for a delayed article, he wrote in 1927 to the editor of *Arts and Decorations*, "I am working on an extremely difficult and exacting task of designing and constructing a Persian Court . . . we hope that it will be the best piece of genuine Persian architecture that has been done perhaps for centuries."⁴⁸ A few years later, he wrote to his Iranian friend and a prominent member of the SNH, Hussein 'Ala':

I want to be in Iran to make my contribution to the architectural development of the country. I think as I have written [Ali Asghar] Hekmat that the present architectural trend is for the most part very disappointing; that it threatens to break Iran's great tradition, to impose upon her as if she were a conquered country the architecture of another time and place that is wholly contradictory to the spirit of Iranian art. . . . I still think there have been some sadly lost opportunities and that Iran has not yet got a glimpse of how magnificently her own architecture can guide her. You had a glimpse of the sort of thing I had in mind from the sketches made for the library. I still believe I can design a library for Iran perhaps better than anyone else.⁴⁹

By "anyone else," Pope meant his French rivals André Godard (1881–1965) and Maxime Siroux (1907–75), who were commissioned by the state and the SNH to design the Archaeological Museum (*museh-yi iran bastan*) and the Public Library in Tehran (fig. 3.5). A few days later, Pope persisted, "I cannot tell you how I grieve over the ineptness of most of the architecture being built in Iran today . . . the rebuilding of the country and the revival of Iran's artistic spirit is

48 Letter from Pope to Mary Fantin Roberts of *Arts and Decorations* in New York, September 20, 1927; NYPL/AUP, Box 1 General Correspondence of Arthur Upham Pope 1926–27, file "A."

49 Letter from Pope to Hussein 'Ala', January 2, 1937, London; NYPL/AUP, Box 3 General Correspondence 1934, file "1937 A."



FIGURE 3.5 *André Godard, main and southern façade of the Archaeological Museum of Iran (Muzeh-yi Iran Bastan), Tehran 1936–9. Private collection, photographed by Farokh Khadem (IMAGE COURTESY OF CYRUS SAMII).*

being damaged and deflected.”⁵⁰ While he must have meant the International Style, which he loathed, the style used by Godard and Siroux—later dubbed as neo-Achaemenid and neo-Sassanian—came to be known by Pope’s colleagues as “Pope Architecture.” His biographer reproduced the images of the National Bank (*bank-i melli*), the Police headquarters, and the Archaeological Museum as its best examples. The fact that these buildings were designed by French and German architects active under Reza Shah demonstrates the extent to which Pope, who never built anything in Iran, has been overestimated in historiography at the expense of friends and foes. While these new styles were products of the hegemonic discourse nurtured by Orientalists like Pope, Godard, and Herzfeld, their production was not without history or contestation.

French and American cultural and academic rivalries went beyond architectural commissions. Since his first visit to Iran in 1925, Pope attempted to create an institution parallel to the SNH and its publications. The American

50 Letter from Pope to Hussein ‘Ala’, January 22, 1937, London; NYPL/AUP, Box 3 Personal correspondence 1934, file “1937 A.”

Institute of Persian Art and Archaeology (AIPAA) in the 1930s and the Asia Institute of the 1960s and 1970s were, in many ways, competing with the SNH and other cultural establishments in Iran. When Godard's *Athar-e Iran* (*Athār-e Īrān*; 1936–49) came out in 1936, Pope complained to Wilber, “It is, as usual, a little pretentious, pseudo-scientific and a far too many ‘I’s’ in it,” adding, “The Survey will contain, when finished, 3500 pages. The word ‘I’ is only to be found in footnote quotations.”⁵¹ He assured Hussein ‘Ala’ that “his” *Survey* would be “the greatest assets and weapons in the hand of the Foreign Office for compelling respect and admiration for Iran’s achievements,” while encouraging its dissemination in all diplomatic and academic venues. “It ought to be where it can be seen constantly in every Legation, where every visitor can see the prodigious record of Iran’s contribution to the world.”⁵² The rivalry between the *Athar-e Iran* and the *Survey* was not a mere contest between Great Powers in the field of art history; it also revealed the arbitrary constructs as Persian Art and Persian Studies as normative practices in the domain of the discourse on pure knowledge. In this sense, one could propose that perhaps the *Survey* was meant to be the Iranian (art historical) answer to Napoleon’s *Description de l’Égypte* (1809–13).

Pope’s personal and professional interests coincided with Pahlavi political and cultural ambitions; this secured his position in Iranian society. In contrast to his colonial rivals, he was first financially supported by both Reza and Muhammad Reza Shah (r. 1941–79) and then immortalized in a Pahlavi monument. His relations with elite Iranians enabled him to remain close to the court; and in the last decades of his life, he acted as a consultant on buying art. This position was well exploited not only by Pope but also by the local elite, who knew “the advertising value to Persia of such a magnificent work” as the *Survey*.⁵³ As early as 1928, Reza Shah’s finance minister and a founding member of the SNH, Firuz Mirza Firuz, thanked Pope for “what you are doing to popularize Persian art in America and Europe,” adding, “I believe every Persian will be enthusiastic about learning from authoritative leaders in the knowledge of art, ‘What the World Owes to Persia,’ a fact that Persians themselves do not know.”⁵⁴ In retrospect, Pope had done far less work “for Iran’s art and archaeology” than was believed. He was never as closely involved as André and

51 Letter from Pope to Donald Wilber, January 26, 1937, London; NYPL/AUP, Box 4 Personal correspondence 1937, file “Wilb-Wilk”, p. 2. See Godard 1936–49.

52 Letter from Pope to Hussein ‘Ala’, March 5, 1937, London; NYPL/AUP, Box 3 General Correspondence 1934, file “1937 A.”

53 Letter from Firuz Mirza Firuz to Pope, March 28, 1928, Tehran (quoted in *Surveyors*, 298).

54 Letter from Firuz Mirza Firuz to Pope, March 28, 1928, Tehran (quoted in *Surveyors*, 298).

Yedda Godard in their lifelong effort vested in the Archaeological Museum and Tehran University's Faculty of Fine Arts. Nor did Pope spend year after year traveling, documenting, excavating, and producing an outstanding body of scholarship on Persianate art, as did Herzfeld.

"You may be right in the parallelism of the results of their [colonial] activities," wrote Oleg Grabar (1929–2011) in 2007, "but they stand on very different pedestals."⁵⁵ "To set Pope and Herzfeld in parallel to each other is tricky, because Herzfeld was a true scholar with very odd egocentric manias and a certain amount of collecting madness," added Grabar, "while Pope was a promoter in cahoots with dealers but with a great culture, an immense charm (not so of Herzfeld) and a fast intelligence (I remember him well)." Later, the rapport between Muhammad Reza Shah and the White House help promote Pope over Godard and Herzfeld. By 1966, when the king was ready and willing to recall these veteran Orientalists to Iran in order to contribute to his Great Civilization, the two latter had died. Pope had outlived his rivals into immortality.

From the outset, Pope's scholarly aptitude was questioned by many. During a private showing of the London exhibition in 1930, Teymurtash noticed lacking artifacts and asked Godard, under whose supervision Pope had packed the objects for England. The two men concluded, "Pope doesn't know anything about this kind of thing."⁵⁶ A year later, the representative at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, Frederick Wulsin (1891–1961), conceded to Museum Director Horace Jayne (1898–1975) that Iranian archaeology "would be better off" without Pope.⁵⁷ "Unfortunately," the President of Tehran's American College, Samuel Jordan (1871–1952), remarked, "Mr. Pope did actually send certain articles out of the country without the knowledge of the Persian authorities."⁵⁸ In 1931, the director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, James Henry Breasted (1865–1935), expressed "misgivings" about his scholarship.⁵⁹ Similar comments continued to appear in diplomatic records. In 1934, the American attaché remarked that Pope "is cordially disliked by both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Education [Hekmat]," adding, "He has the open hostility of the British Minister and all members of his staff. . . . He is openly condemned by Monsieur Godard. . . . He is cordially disliked by Dr. Herzfeld, Dr. Erich F. Schmidt and all other archaeologists, some

55 Oleg Grabar in email communication with Talinn Grigor, September 25, 2007.

56 U.S. Archives, Hart, dispatch 165, 841.607 Persian Art/2, September 23, 1930.

57 U.S. Archives, Hart, dispatch 735, 891.927/124, July 21, 1931.

58 Quoted in Madj 2001, 33.

59 U.S. Archives, Murray to Hart, letter 891.927 Persepolis/35, May 11, 1931.

of whom have made certain charges in regard to his activities in Persia which have reached the ears of many high Persian officials.”⁶⁰

After Reza Shah’s 1941 exile, Pope forged a close relationship with the young king Mohammad Reza, who in July 1956 appointed him general consultant on Persian Art, in exchange for “certain gifts.”⁶¹ During the volatile period of his reign, Pope expressed devout loyalty to Muhammad Reza Shah in a 1949 letter. In it, all the points, from Iran’s foundational place in world history to the role of the monarch in artistic revival, were eloquently highlighted:

I speak for myself and my colleagues, as well as many in America who would like to extend to you their greetings, and envy us the privilege of working with a young, forward-looking monarch who now faces the crucial task of initiating once more a great renaissance in the life of a nation that has played such a significant role in the history of civilization. . . . We are deeply conscious of the great debt that civilization owes to Iran. . . . Thus we hope to use your, and our tradition together, to serve you, your people and the future of your land, we shall, in fact, be servants of the Crown, of the people of Iran, yet likewise true to our own heritage.⁶²

For Muhammad Reza Shah, Pope represented a solid link between his father’s reign and his own and provided an art historiography that fitted into the Pahlavi project of modernity.

Pope made a special request to the director of the SNH’s Board of Trustees. During the Fourth Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in New York, he approached Isa Sadiq with a wish: “My wish is that my corpse be given to the earth in Persia so that others begin to appreciate it.” This was going to be his last gesture for Persia, a finale to his lifelong mission to make Iran a household name in the West. Pope added, “I beg of you to inform the queen about this issue and get permission for me to state in my will that my corpse will be transferred to Iran and will be interred in Isfahan.”⁶³ Despite the self-aggrandizing motives behind the request, Sadiq was moved by Pope’s “passion for Persia.”

60 U.S. Archives, Hornibrook, dispatch 123, 891.927 Persepolis/90, June 25, 1934.

61 In a letter from Dr. Ali Amini, Ambassador of Iran to the United States on July 19, 1956; Ministry 2001, 489.

62 Letter from Pope to Muhammad Reza Shah, date and place unspecified [probably around the king’s visit to the United States in November 1949]; NYPL/AUP, Box 11 Asia Institute (cont’d), file “Asia Institute (cont’d), Iran.”

63 Sadiq 1959–74, 3: 366.



FIGURE 3.6

Pope's letter to Muhammad Reza Shah, reproduced as inscription inside the mausoleum

(PHOTOGRAPH © TALINN GRIGOR, 1999).

He had been a devotee of Pope as a young member of the SNH and promised now to relay his wish to the queen. This conversation was followed by an official letter to Muhammad Reza Shah, making the final arrangements for the location and the design of the tomb. Later, the letter became the centerpiece of the mausoleum once it was erected and complete (fig. 3.6). "Isfahan, of course, is my special love," Pope wrote, "where my most important work was done and my greatest happiness."⁶⁴

When Pope died in Shiraz on September 3, 1969, all arrangements had already been made by a royal decree for his state funeral and monumental resting place.⁶⁵ Under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Art, the SNH

64 Iran National Archives 290, Micro-reel 44, Doc. 75, p. 1, undated, Tehran. Also see SNH 1976, 431.

65 On Pope's funeral, see memoirs by Richard Frye, Carl Penton, Sumi Gluck, and James Underwood in *Surveyors*. Also see "Pope's *Aramgah* in Isfahan", *Ayandegan* 522, Shahrivar 13, 1347/September 4, 1968, 1; "Commemoration Day for Pope", *Ayandegan* 523, Shahrivar 15, 1347/September 6, 1968, 1; J. Underwood, "Iran was His Life and His Love", *Kayhan International*, September 4, 1969; J. Underwood, "Final Homage to Pope", *Kayhan*

was commissioned to erect a mausoleum for Pope on the banks of Zayandeh River in Isfahan, which was renamed “Professor Pope’s Park.”⁶⁶ The possibility of constructing a fine monument for an American art historian in the heart of Safavid Isfahan—architecturally speaking, the most acclaimed city in Iran—was a result of the marriage between public monuments and individual power in the 1970s. The SNH had been given the responsibility of burying the great men of Iran in the land of Iran: Firdausi (1926–34) in Tus by French archaeologist André Godard; the tomb-garden of Sufi poet Hafiz (1936–39) in Shiraz by French architect Maxim Siroux, the burial complex of scientist Avicenna (1945–52) in Hamadan by Iranian architect Houshang Seyhoun; the mausoleum of Nadir Shah (1955–59) in Mashhad also the work of Seyhoun; the tomb of poet Omar Khayyam (1956–62) in Neshapur. A reflection of Pope’s theories on Persian art and an example of the late Pahlavi *modus operandi*, the tomb was the SNH’s last major architectural undertaking, completed in 1972.

Ackerman’s funeral in Shiraz on January 25, 1977, was “very quiet and small.”⁶⁷ As her disciple Abd al-Hussein Hamzavi (1910–79) put it, her death “marks the end of an era in Persian Art.”⁶⁸ The *New York Times* devoted an article to her passing, referring to her as “Mrs. Pope.”⁶⁹ A friend remarked: “Alas, poor Phyllis, called ‘Pope’ and ‘Mrs.’ at the very end, when she wasn’t around to read the proofs or fire off a letter to the editor.”⁷⁰ Ackerman’s tomb inscription reads, “Dr. Phyllis Ackerman, Professor Pope’s wife and collaborator who died in Shiraz in 1977 AD.” She joined “Professor Pope under the mausoleum’s second dome,” wrote Sadiq, who was a witness to the scholars’ lives and deaths.⁷¹

Similarly, this exclusivist masculine discourse is also revealed by the *Karnameh*’s description of events and use of terminology. Ackerman referred to as “his wife (*hamsar-ash*)” is eclipsed by the passing allusions to the fact that she too would be buried there: “North of the aramgah another grave for Professor Pope’s wife was constructed.”⁷² Subsequently, most of the *Karnameh*’s

International, September 22, 1969; “Arthur Pope, 88, Expert on Iran; Leading Authority on Old Persian Culture Dies”, *New York Times*, September 4, 1969, 47; and “Pope’s Photographs Tour Japan”, *Tehran Journal*, September 15, 1969.

66 See a photograph of Rexford Stead standing next to the plaque erected by the municipality of Isfahan, indicating “Professor Pope’s Park” (Isfahan, 1969; *Surveyors*, 563).

67 Memo by Gluck (quoted in *Surveyors*, 570). Also, see H. Ferretti, “Phyllis Ackerman Dies in Iran at 84”, *Mainichi Daily News*, February 1, 1977 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 572).

68 Memo by Gluck (quoted in *Surveyors*, 570).

69 *New York Times*, February 1, 1977.

70 *Surveyors*, 572.

71 *Surveyors*, 4.

72 SNH 1976, 430.

energy goes into reconstructing Pope's achievements, letter, and resting place. Ackerman's presence is raveled in an absence of a presence both in the mausoleum and in its historiography; she seems to exist as a supplement of "Professor Pope." In Derridian terminology, Ackerman is present as a parasite. The design of the mausoleum thus speaks to their relationship, collaboration, and the gendered dynamics that conditioned their identity as historians of Iranian art. In the tomb, as in life, she is present as a mere architectural echo: in the formal repetition of the "second dome" and inscriptional duplication of facts.

Posthumous attempts to reconstruct Ackerman's contribution to Iranian art did not situate her on an equal footing with Pope. The voluminous *Surveyors of Persian Art* (1996), while invaluable to Iranian studies, remains methodologically problematic in that it mimics the original *Survey* in style and in tactics. The editors admit that the uneven attention paid to the two scholars is due to the lack of access to her papers, locked in the basement of the Asia Institute in Shiraz as a result of the Iranian Revolution. This did not mean that Ackerman does not speak—far from it if we consider the *Survey* as the result of her labor. That Ackerman did not insist on either a mausoleum or a biography goes to show that she spoke in *différance*: the archival material that the biographers could have relied on was that produced privately by Ackerman—diaries, journals, and personal files. While these documents stayed in Shiraz, where she had left them, Pope's legacy had long been placed in public institutions such as libraries, museums, and archival collections, often by Ackerman. The Arthur Pope Papers held at the New York Public Library reveal a meticulous and life-long collection of practically every single document that Pope produced with the intention of archiving.

The exclusivity of the public and private domains is predicated on the implications of masculine authority and feminine absence. Ackerman had a voice, but it has to be located somewhere other than in (or as) monuments. It is only after the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and after the reforms of President Khatami that, it seems, the two names of the two scholar-partners, were displayed in public as equal. During the late 1990s, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of the Islamic Republic refurbished the mausoleum of Pope and Ackerman, which had been unmarked under a lock since the revolution. New plaques for each of the scholars were placed, side-by-side, as (if) equal, at least in representation (Fig. 3.7). Nevertheless, here too, she is identified as "Professor Pope's wife."



FIGURE 3.7 New plaques indicating the names and dates of Arthur Pope and Phyllis Ackerman on the exterior of their joint tomb, Isfahan, 1972
(PHOTOGRAPH © TALINN GRIGOR, 2007).

In the afternoon of September 10, 1969, Empress Farah Pahlavi called upon Phyllis Ackerman to offer her personal condolences for Pope's passing.⁷³ It must have been during this meeting at the Narenjestan, the Qajar palace turned over to the Asia Institute, that "on a special command" the empress offered the scholar a lifetime retirement allowance. While neither the empress nor the scholar could or would overturn the "the masculinist myths of modernism," they both managed to challenge and thus shift its basic assumptions in and for Iran and its art.⁷⁴ Pope himself seems to have changed after a lifetime of intellectual partnership with Ackerman. "When the 'hegemonic discourse' repositions itself so that it can occupy the position of the other it too becomes subject to a major transformation to its own decolonization."⁷⁵

In a posthumously published article in the *Acta Iranica*, Pope had maintained, "the ideal historian . . . needs more knowledge and more skills than one

73 See a photograph of Empress Farah and Ackerman meet prior to the first Arts Festival, Shiraz, August 1967 (*Surveyors*, 481).

74 Pollock 1988, 50.

75 Spivak 1999.

person can hope for.”⁷⁶ He had instead proposed a “sympathetic and informed cooperation among the associated disciplines, a sense of fraternal dedication, mutual advantage and mutual responsibility.” “Coordinated effort” while making “rigorous ethical and psychological demands . . . offers promising result.” More critically, Pope had questioned the process that is invested in writing history, “History . . . what can it hope to achieve, and how?” Perhaps more surprisingly for an Orientalist who had spent his life validating a staunchly linear history, he had asked, “What does history aim at?” or “Are there many kinds of history?” Pope first rejects both “naïve realism” and “elementary empiricism” as methods of writing history on the basis that “the contribution of the observer to the observed can never be wholly eliminated.”⁷⁷ Quoting from *Tales of the Genji* by Lady Murasaki, he had concluded, “history books show us only a corner of life.”⁷⁸

In the 1970s Iran, Ackerman’s pronouncement of artistic judgments and Empress Farah’s interventions in cultural and political decisions, delineated the gendered politics of these structures. They introduced flexible identities and subjective interpretation to the construct of modernity. More importantly perhaps, their activities subverted the Western modernist project of cultural exclusion. Their presence in the cultural and political milieu of Iran—themselves inherently linked to each other—disturbed the strategies of inclusion/exclusion. On the one hand, Ackerman, posthumously called “the gracious old matriarch of Persian studies,” brought much-needed doubt to academic assertions and at times uncritical theories about “3000 years of continuous . . . architectural tradition.”⁷⁹ She offered a reading of artifacts within their cultural and historical context to replace a judgment of art objects in the vacuum of the museum.

On the other hand, Empress Farah offered a more liberal practice of monarchy—not only as an ancient tradition and a traditional institution, but also as a modern practice. She resisted certain ways of running and controlling the country, which although was not revolutionary, was certainly exas-

76 See Pope 1974.

77 Pope 1974, 154. He goes on, “The seductive fallacy that any idea or fact will somehow constitute a solid brick in the ultimate edifice of knowledge is philosophically illiterate, and the cause of much wasted effort. We must ask continuously what we mean by knowledge, what kind of knowledge do we want? What is the relation of description to interpretation? What shall we say to the historian of art who boasts that his work is happily free from value judgment . . .”

78 Pope 1974, 153.

79 Letter from Carl J. Penton to Rexford Stead, January 1, 1982 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 553); Pope 1969, 115.

perating. As the head of most of the official cultural activities during the last two decades of the monarchy, a premise of comprehensive preservation and inclusive collection constituted the basis of Empress Farah's approach.⁸⁰ Everything of artistic value, from Qajar caravanserais to Ilkhanid potteries to Sassanian ruins were to be protected as a part of Iran's cultural heritage. She channeled oil money in order to reinstate artworks that had been smuggled out of Iran or sold to Westerners during the Qajar and the early Pahlavi years.⁸¹ The same method of inclusion and preservation was applied to the collection of contemporary paintings as well as other forms of fine arts.

"It is relevant then to develop feminist analyses of the founding moments of modernity and modernism, to discern its sexualized structures, to discover past resistances and differences, to examine how women producers developed alternative models for negotiating modernity and the spaces of femininity."⁸² What modernist art history—including in particular for Iran, the historiography amassed by and around Pope and the *Survey*—celebrates is a selective tradition, which normalizes as the only modernism, a particular and gendered set of practices. Any attempt to deal with the cultural historiography of twentieth-century Iran that is made by women necessitates a deconstruction of the modernist myth. We are not only dealing with the inherently exclusivist agenda of modernity, but also a modernity that is being construed in the imperialist domain. The Western colonial project was the creation and articulation of cultural difference. In Iran's case of the 1970s, we are dealing with women's production of alternative models of modernity, of and in *différance*.

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PART 2

Arthur Upham Pope: Life and Achievements



CATALOGUE MRS. PHOEBE A. HEARST LOAN COLLECTION

EDITED BY
J. NILSEN LAURVIK, DIRECTOR
IN COLLABORATION
WITH
ARTHUR UPHAM POPE, M. A.
R. MEYER-RIEFSTAHL, PH. D.
PHYLLIS ACKERMAN, M. A., PH. D.



THE PALACE OF FINE ARTS
CONDUCTED BY
THE SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION
SAN FRANCISCO
1917

FIGURE 4.1 Catalogue Mrs. Phoebe A. Hearst Loan Collection, *edited by J. Nilsen Laurvik, in collaboration with Arthur Upham Pope, R. Meyer-Riefstahl, and Phyllis Ackerman* (San Francisco, 1917).

Arthur Upham Pope: His Life and Times

Jonathan M. Bloom

Persia was a sleeping beauty; she simply woke to my kiss.¹

Arthur Upham Pope (February 7, 1881–September 3, 1969) was an American educator and author who almost singlehandedly made Persian art popular in the first half of the twentieth century through a series of international exhibitions, congresses and publications. Largely self-taught, as he had no formal training in art history or languages, his interests in Persian culture coincided fortuitously with those of the new Pahlavi dynasty of Iran; as he had no independent means, he relied on his considerable charm, dealing in the art-market, and wealthy friends to support his work. While many admired his P. T. Barnum-like showmanship, he came into conflict with some of his more professionally trained colleagues in universities and museums who disapproved of Pope's multiple and conflicting roles as promoter and salesman.

Pope was born in the village of Phenix (now part of West Warwick), Rhode Island to the reverend Louis Atherton Pope and Imogene Titus Pope. Little, if anything in his background would suggest the unusual career he would later follow. His father, a Baptist minister, came from an old New England family and had graduated from Brown University; his mother was one of the eighteen graduates of the first class of Wellesley College in 1879. Arthur was a talented pianist and musician as a child and maintained a lifelong interest in music; he was sent to Worcester Academy, a private boarding school in Massachusetts from which he entered Brown University, earning a B.A. in 1904 and a master's degree two years later. At Brown, he studied with the philosopher Alexander Meiklejohn (1872–1964), who had begun teaching there in 1897. After serving as dean at Brown, in 1912 Meiklejohn was named president of Amherst College where he served until 1924.

After completing his master's degree, Pope remained on the Brown faculty as an instructor in philosophy, meanwhile beginning a doctoral dissertation on a new interpretation of Plato's *Dialogues* at Cornell University (where his mentor Meiklejohn had studied). "Two graduate years at Brown and Cornell

¹ *Surveyors*, 22.

and one at Harvard put him in sight of a doctorate only to be frustrated by illness while at work on a thesis: [Pope] learned that he had diabetes.”² For the remainder of his very long life, Pope was a terrible hypochondriac: “I have angina pectoris, diabetes, arthritis, and I suffer terribly from insomnia. I’m a wreck,” he said in 1949, when he was only 68. A colleague, once performing a quick search in his luggage, found only ten bottles of pills and a bar of chocolate.³ He lived to be 88.

On June 17, 1909, Pope married Bertha Louise Clark (1881–ca. 1976), who had graduated from Brown with the class of 1905, and two years later the couple moved to Berkeley, California, where he was appointed first instructor—later assistant professor—of philosophy at the University of California, specializing in aesthetics, which would be central to his approach to Persian art. At Berkeley, he became friendly with fellow faculty members in anthropology as well as with students from India. Pope spent the summer of 1914 at the University of Colorado as a lecturer for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His left-wing politics were evident in his work against the oppression of African-Americans in the US and his membership in the Protestant Friends of Ireland, an organization that advocated an end to British rule there.

At a reception hosted by the university president in 1911, Pope was introduced to Phoebe Apperson Hearst (1842–1919), the widow of the wealthy California senator and businessman George Hearst (1820–1891) and mother of the newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951). In 1898 Phoebe Hearst had converted to the Baha’i faith and in 1901 founded the University of California’s museum of anthropology; at the meeting Pope asked to borrow some of her oriental carpets for his course on aesthetics.

Pope had first encountered Persian rugs in the house of his aunt Augusta Pope in Boston. “I looked at those rugs” he said years later, “and it was like a call to the pulpit.”⁴ Already during his years at Brown, Pope had begun searching out rug dealers in Boston and Providence, reselling what he acquired through the University Art Shop. An advertisement stated:

We have some very distinguished Oriental Rugs, both antique and modern. They have been selected from [the] collection of [the Boston dealer] Arthur Urbane Dilley, who is one of the foremost experts in the country. We have constant access to his remarkable collection and are

2 Ibid., 48.

3 Ibid., 375.

4 “Arthur Pope, 88, Expert on Iran”, *New York Times*, September 4, 1969.

thus able to offer rug lovers here, pieces of exceptional beauty and value.⁵

These early forays in dealing were a foretaste of Pope's later career, where he used his knowledge of suppliers and collectors to supplement his usually modest and irregular income. In 1909 he convinced the director of the Rhode Island School of Design that he could organize and install an exhibition of Oriental carpets borrowed from private collectors and from New York and Boston dealers; this was the first of many exhibitions that Pope would organize, virtually all of them combining works in public and private collections with dealers' stock for sale.

Five years later and now in California in the autumn of 1914, Pope organized an exhibition of Mrs. Hearst's carpets at the university. But Pope's interests were varied: the following year he served as an advisor to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco and collaborated with one of his Japanese students on the design of its Japanese pavilion. In 1916 he became executive secretary of the California branch of the American Neutral Conference Committee, a pacifist organization that opposed US entry into the European war. In December of that year, Mrs. Hearst's carpets and paintings were exhibited at the San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts (fig. 4.1). Pope catalogued the rugs and organized the bibliography; Rudolf Meyer-Riefstahl (1880–1936), who had been secretary-general of the great Munich exhibition of Islamic art in 1910, wrote on textiles, while Miss Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977) wrote the section on tapestries and provided the bibliography on tapestry weaving, designers and weavers.⁶ A native of Oakland, California, Phyllis Ackerman had entered the University of California as a prodigy in mathematics, but when she was nineteen she changed disciplines after taking Pope's courses in philosophy and aesthetics. She became an instructor at the university while writing her doctoral thesis on Hegel's *Phenomonology*, which she completed in 1917 at the age of 24.

In that year Pope urged that the United States move to end the Great War by negotiation; future peace, he argued, could be insured by collective guarantees, but when the United States joined in the European war, Pope abandoned his pacifist position and began work in the Personnel Division of the General Staff related to officer promotions. Pope was already in personal debt

5 *Surveyors*, 49. In 1903, Dille (1873–1959), later founder of the Hajji Baba Club, received an inheritance of \$10,000 allowing him to set up a carpet shop in Boston. See http://www.hajji75.org/RugsintheCity.html#anchor_1 (last accessed February 25, 2014).

6 Lauvrik 1917.

for the expenses of the American Neutral Conference Committee, to which he belonged. Debt was another leitmotif in Pope's career; he was always hard up for cash.⁷

Scandal broke out when Pope deserted his "beautiful, talented and popular" wife Bertha to elope with Ackerman. Bertha meanwhile seems to have been busy seducing Pope's male students.⁸ She eventually returned to Providence and married Prof. Lindsay Todd Damon (1871–1940) of the Brown English department. Writing under the name Bertha Damon, in 1938 she published the best-selling book, *Grandma Called it Carnal*, a thinly-disguised humorous novel about being raised by her bizarre grandmother in Chester, Connecticut.⁹

Pope was immediately dismissed from the University of California for "moral turpitude," and for months the couple wandered about without income or destination. Among the stodgy California elites with whom Pope had socialized the ramifications lasted for years, and decades later the 'scandal' still reverberated on the Berkeley campus. To make matters worse, in December 1917 the *San Francisco Examiner*, which was owned by William Randolph Hearst, accused the philandering Pope of sympathizing with the anti-British revolutionary movement in India that was supposedly being financed by "Kaiser's war chest." Pope was forced to testify in court, admitting that "there are certain grievances in India against the British government and they warrant aggressive action in behalf of the interests of the Hindu people."¹⁰ At the same time, his presidency of the Cosmopolitan Club at the University of California, "an organization known to be disloyal," was also held against him, as was his collecting funds for the defense of members in the International Workers of the World who had been charged with "seditious conspiracy."¹¹ Pope's populist and left-wing leanings are another constant in his career, although they sometimes seemed quite at odds with his penchant for hobnobbing with the rich.

Pope decided to leave California and in 1918 accepted the invitation of his former mentor Alexander Meiklejohn to be acting associate professor of philosophy at Amherst College. Two years later, after the divorce was final, Arthur

7 *Surveyors*, 52.

8 *Ibid.*, 68.

9 Martha Mitchell, *Encyclopedia Brunoniana* (Providence: Brown University Library, 1993), s.v. "Damon, Lindsay, Todd"; Claudia Van Nes, "Grandma Called it Carnal", *The Hartford Courant*, March 5, 2000 (http://articles.courant.com/2000-03-05/news/0003050439_1_pot-letters-chester; last accessed February 25, 2014); Beatrice Sherman, "A Rock-Ribbed Connecticut Dame", *New York Times*, November 6, 1938.

10 *Surveyors*, 53.

11 *Ibid.*, 70.

Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman were married. They moved to New York City and set up a studio in the Anderson Galleries building at Park Avenue and 59th Street, where Pope established himself as an art ‘adviser.’ Throughout his long career Pope would continue to straddle the line between scholar and dealer, although this division was not as clear in the early decades of the last century as it is now. Ackerman, who shared most of Pope’s interests over the forty-nine years of their marriage, also shared his left-wing sympathies. According to her nephew, John Douglas Forbes, she too shared his love of the proletariat—“at a distance.”¹² Unlike Pope, who appears to have been rather conventional in his beliefs, Ackerman was something of an oddball—for example, she saw sexual symbolism everywhere.

In 1923, Alma Spreckels (1881–1968), the young wife of a San Francisco sugar baron, founded the Legion of Honor and hired Pope as its director and Ackerman as the associate director, but the three had a serious falling out over collecting policy while Pope and Ackerman were in the midst of a collecting tour in France, Italy, Switzerland and Germany. They managed to get as far as London when their money ran out, but Leverton Harris (1864–1926), the noted art collector, gave them a hundred pounds to help get them home to the States. Throughout his life, Pope constantly relied on the generosity of his wealthy friends.

Despite their falling out with Spreckels, Pope and Ackerman returned to California and found themselves once again at ease. But Pope had also learned that the rich “were fickle, demanding, and absorbed in themselves, loyal only to their wealth and their own glory.”¹³ Having built up a small nest egg, in 1925 Pope and Ackerman bought a small house in San Mateo, south of San Francisco, and for the next six or seven years they commuted on their various projects between San Mateo, New York and Europe.¹⁴ Meanwhile, in 1924 Pope was made Advisory Curator of Muhammadan Art in the Art Institute of Chicago, a position he held until 1932.¹⁵

In 1926 the San Francisco businessman and philanthropist Albert Bender (1866–1941) was asked for advice about completing interior decoration of the Ahwanee Hotel, which Gilbert Stanley Underwood (1890–1960) had designed for Yosemite National Park; Bender recommended Pope and Ackerman, who became responsible for procuring everything from beds and linens to carpets and ornament. Work began at the end of 1926 and continued until the hotel’s

¹² Ibid., 63.

¹³ Ibid., 75.

¹⁴ Ibid., 78.

¹⁵ See Kadoi’s chapter in the present volume.

opening in July of the following year. Pope hired Chimon Rafi Mayeri (1898–1995), an Iranian Jew who had opened a shop in San Francisco in 1924, the year after the earthquake had forced him to leave Yokohama, where he had sold Persian carpets to the Japanese. Pope and Ackerman commissioned Mayeri to make oversize (8 × 20 and 10 × 18 feet) kilims in Shiraz for the hotel because their designs were similar to those of ‘Navajo’ rugs, which were too small for the big public spaces in which they were to be used. Pope also ordered seven kilims from Minassian.¹⁶ At the same time, Pope also seems to have established a business of making rugs in China, but hampered by the Chinese civil war, he also “organized some looms in Persia” (perhaps through Mayeri) along with weavers and designers.

In 1925 Pope made his first trip to Persia accompanied by Henry J. Patten (1862–1938), a wealthy Chicago grain broker and trustee-patron of the Art Institute. They first stopped in Egypt, then bought a Dodge car in Jerusalem as well as a ‘baby’ Pathé camera to take motion pictures.¹⁷ They drove from Damascus across the desert to Baghdad, where they met Gertrude Bell (1868–1929), the British resident, to Qasr-i Shirin, across the Patak Pass to Kermanshah, Isfahan, Qom, and Tehran, where Pope had an introduction to Samuel M. Jordan (1871–1952), a Presbyterian minister and president of the American College in Tehran.¹⁸ Pope was intensely aware of the Persian contribution to civilization and how during the Great War Russia and Britain “and the whole imperialistic attitude” had nearly partitioned Persia, what Pope considered an “international outrage.”¹⁹ Although Pope criticized the imperial powers, his own view was not far from the French *mission civilisatrice*, for he desired to “show Persians the greatness of their own life and their immense inherited treasure which they were not properly aware of nor properly utilizing.”

Jordan persuaded Pope to give a speech, “The Past and Future of Persian Art,” at the Young Men’s Christian Association of Tehran.²⁰ The lecture was attended by Mohammad ‘Ali Foroughi (1877–1942), the Minister of Finance and president of the Society for the Preservation of the National Heritage, who brought his students and translated Pope’s English into Persian. In the speech, Pope extolled the greatness of Persian art and called for action to revive

16 *Surveyors*, 123, 125.

17 Patten’s reckoning of accounts after their trip is given on *Surveyors*, 111.

18 On Samuel Jordan and the American (later Alborz) College, see the special issue of *Iranian Studies*, 44: 5 (September 2011).

19 On the partition of Persia proposed in the Sykes-Picot-Sazonov agreement, see McMeekin 2011.

20 The text of the talk is given on *Surveyors*, 93–110.

Persian art, concluding with a section on the “Wrong Views of Art that Delay Revival in Persia.” He said that skill and labor were no substitute for taste and sincere feeling, that age is no assurance of quality, and that expensive is not always beautiful. “One page of the work of Mir Ali Qazvini,” he said, “is worth a hundred Peacock Thrones.”²¹

On April 22, 1925, Pope was invited by Foroughi to repeat his stirring performance for Jafar Assad Bakhtiari (1878–ca. 1934), minister of post and telegraph, Reza Khan (1878–1944), the Cossack who had led 2,000 men into Tehran in 1921 and became *sepah salar* or minister of war and commander-in-chief of the army, and Hussein ‘Ala’ (1881–1964), who had just returned from a stint as Persian ambassador in Washington. On Pope’s advice, Reza Khan used his own personal funds to pay for the restoration of the mosque of Shaykh Lutfallah in Isfahan, which Pope had just visited. Reza Khan also ordered that the design of the Marble Palace in Tehran, which was then under construction, be modified to include a tiled dome inspired by that of the Luftallah mosque. By December of that year, Reza Khan had declared himself first Shah of the Pahlavi dynasty. Pope had made a very powerful friend.

Pope was active during his months in Tehran. He managed to photograph some dated carpets in the shrine of Shah ‘Abbas at Qom. He also wrote in a letter to Gertrude Bell on February 11, 1926:

We started a museum there and the government has agreed to support it. Herzfeld drew up a list of public monuments that have to be preserved and a stringent law passed for their preservation. We have [also] made excellent progress in the matter of the French treaty, and I believe we can really secure a profound modification of it that will really permit of free work there, or something approaching it.²²

The German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld (1878–1948), who had been in Iran since 1922, was appointed in April 1926 to be archaeological adviser to the government. After the government terminated the French monopoly on archaeological excavations, Herzfeld was the government’s choice to head the antiquities department, but France insisted it be a Frenchman, so in 1928 André Godard (1881–1965) was asked to serve as director of the Archaeological Services of Iran. Herzfeld occupied various positions in Iran until he was forced to leave at the end of 1934.²³ Pope and Herzfeld rarely saw eye to eye.

²¹ Ibid., 110.

²² Ibid., 112.

²³ On Herzfeld, see Gunter and Hauser 2005.

Pope was also active promoting American business interests in Iran. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company had been granted a sixty-year concession in 1901, but when Pope was interviewed by the San Francisco *Examiner* in September 1926, he said that there were “great opportunities” awaiting Americans in Persia. Persia, “being at present out of harmony with the great European nations, is anxious for American capitalists to come and exploit her riches for mutual benefit.”²⁴

Back in the United States by the autumn of 1926, Pope was appointed Special Commissioner for Persia to the United States Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia and organized several events on Persian art sponsored by the Persian Commissioner, Hassan Taqizadeh (1878–1970), Mr. Kiachif and Mr. Kazemi, the Persian chargé d'affaires in Washington. Along with Carl Ziegler (1878–1952), a local architect, Pope designed the Persian pavilion, which was modeled on the Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan and housed a display of Persian items for sale, although they were not of the best quality. Pope also organized an Exhibition of Persian Art at Philadelphia Museum, with over 500 objects lent from various museums (Chicago, Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, St. Louis and the Textile Museum) as well as from wealthy collectors including: Mrs. Rockefeller, Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, Mr. Horace Havemeyer, Mr. V. Everit Macy, Mrs. John D. McIlhenny, Mrs. Philip M. Sharples, Mrs. McCormick, Mr. George Hewitt Meyers, and Prof. Sarre. Among the star attractions was the Emperor Carpet, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the smaller Ardebil Carpet (now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art), lent by Sir Joseph Duveen (1869–1939). In addition to carpets, pottery, textiles, bookbinding, calligraphy, miniatures (from the Claude Anet collection), there were pages from a Shah Jahan manuscript and six pages from the [Great Mongol] *Shahnama* that had been lent by the dealers Kelekian and Demotte.²⁵ The exhibition used a rather lax definition of “Persia” since it included Raqqa and Rusafa pottery, both from sites in Syria.

The exhibition was also accompanied by the First International Congress for Persian Art and Archaeology, held over five days in New York, Philadelphia and Washington, and sponsored by the College Art Association. Participants included Laurence Binyon, Ananda Coomaraswamy, Ernst Diez, Ernst Kühnel, Otto Kummel, Gaston Migeon and Gabriel Millet. It began with a reception and session at the residence of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and ended with a banquet arranged by the College Art Association.²⁶ This was the first of Pope's

²⁴ *Surveyors*, 112.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 115–22.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

Persian extravaganzas, with support from a combination of sources including the Persian government, academic organizations, and wealthy contacts. As usual, Pope faced various money troubles along the way. There was “nothing left for proper publicity so the exhibition did not get the notice in New York that it deserved.”²⁷

Nevertheless, buoyed by his successes, two years later in 1928 Pope founded the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology, which was incorporated in 1930. He first proposed the idea to Berthold Laufer (1874–1934), an archaeologist of China at the Field Museum in Chicago; Albert T. Olmstead (1880–1945), Professor of Ancient Near Eastern History at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; William Valentiner (1880–1958), director of the Detroit Institute of Arts, and Friedrich Sarre (1865–1945) in Berlin. Pope wanted to use the Institute to raise funds for archaeological work in Persia, scholarships for students and fellowships for scholars, maintain a “modest center” in Persia with a working library, laboratory and photographic facilities, and establish guarantees or a revolving fund for the publication of monographs, culminating in the projected *Survey of Persian Art*.²⁸ The Institute was first housed at 9 East 89th Street in New York; in 1947 it moved to 7 East 70th Street, an elegant building leased from the Frick Collection, where it was known as the Asia Institute. In addition to the libraries, classrooms, exhibition halls and galleries, it had a private apartment for Pope and Ackerman on the top floor with windows overlooking Central Park.²⁹ As its director and driving force, Pope was always short of cash and constantly trying to raise money from his wealthy acquaintances to support the Institute. At the same time, he began initiating plans for a second International Exhibition of Persian Art to be held at the Royal Academy, London in 1931. Meanwhile, he remained deeply involved in San Francisco cultural matters, trying to reorganize the city’s museums into a “museum university” and serving as a consultant to the San Francisco Opera and Symphony.³⁰

During these years Pope traveled constantly between his bases in California and New York and Europe and Iran, often flying in commercial airplanes to save time (and, he claimed, money).³¹ In the spring of 1929 he returned to Iran for an architectural survey, traveling via Cairo where he bought his first camera and had a brief lesson in photography. On this trip he visited Qasr-i Shirin,

²⁷ Ibid., 115.

²⁸ Ibid., 148–9.

²⁹ Ibid., 359.

³⁰ Ibid., 126–35.

³¹ Ibid., 149.

Taq-i Bustan, and Isfahan. "So with five hundred dollars, contributed as a token of appreciation for designing the outdoor symphony theatre in San Mateo, I bought a camera (Zeiss-Tropica) in Cairo [March 1929], had one lesson and was off to Persia. Within fifteen years I had brought back eight or ten thousand negatives . . ." ³²

Later in that year Phyllis Ackerman developed polio while on a trip up the Nile. She was hospitalized in Cairo, but once she was well enough to travel, she went to Paris to recuperate. ³³ Meanwhile Pope continued to move "around the world" gathering up loans for the exhibition. One day, presumably in 1930, while she was recovering in the hospital, a nurse came in with a suitcase that contained a whole collection of bronzes still "coated with the heavy earth of the Luristan valleys." After cleaning and sorting them, she showed them to her friends Edward Jackson Holmes, Jr., grandson of Oliver Wendell Holmes and director of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and his wife Mary, who were "fascinated, charmed, and delighted with them . . . [claiming] over a hundred pieces for their museum." ³⁴

The first 'Luristan' bronzes, small decorated objects dating from the Iron Age (1300–700 BCE), had been known since the nineteenth century (the British Museum acquired its first in 1854) but illegal commercial excavations in 1927 or 1928 began to produce larger numbers that were offered for sale to museums. ³⁵ Herzfeld published the first half-dozen in the *Illustrated London News* of June 8, 1929. ³⁶ In the following year Pope himself would publish more information about the finds, and André Godard traveled to northern Luristan and was able to report on the plundered graveyards there. ³⁷ The demand for Luristan bronzes was so great that the plunderers were unable to meet the demand and as early as the 1930s rumors began to circulate that some of the pieces on the market were forgeries.

Pope returned again to Iran in 1930 with orders from Shah to allow him entry to, and permission to photograph, such holy sites as Mashhad (the Mosque of Gawhar Shad) and Qom (the Shrine of Fatima). Although he was allowed

32 Ibid., 341.

33 Ibid., 63.

34 Ibid., 189.

35 <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bronzes-of-luristan> (last accessed February 25, 2014).

36 *Illustrated London News*, June 8, 1929, 983.

37 *Surveyors*, 151. A. U. Pope in the *Illustrated London News*, September 6, 1930, 388–91; <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bronzes-of-luristan> (last accessed February 25, 2014); Godard 1931.

into the Isfahan congregational mosque, he was still prevented from entering the Shah Mosque there. Nevertheless its portal provided Pope with inspiration for the centerpiece of the London exhibition of 1931, a thirty-foot replica of the portal to the Masjid-i Shah. Under the patronage of King George and Reza Shah Pahlavi, who had “encouraged” the Mashhad Shrine to lend its treasures along with the Golestan Palace and the National Library, the exhibition at the Royal Academy featured 876 works from all periods, including the Crown Jewels of Iran. Loans in all media worth an estimated \$10 million (perhaps \$300 million today) were exhibited in a dozen galleries at a cost of \$50,000 (perhaps \$1.5 million today).³⁸

The opening of the exhibition on January 7, 1931, coincided with the Second International Congress of Persian Art, held from January 5–10. A constellation of speakers included Hussein ‘Ala’, now ambassador to France, Raymond Koechlin from Paris, Michael Rostovtzeff (who spoke on Luristan bronzes), Friedrich Sarre (who spoke on Parthian art), M. R. Pfister (on Sasanian textiles), Ernst Kühnel (on Seljuk art), K. A. C. Creswell (on the evolution of the dome in Persian architecture), and Carl Lamm (on enameled glass). A posthumous paper by Sir Thomas Arnold was read on the origins of Persian painting, as well as a series of lectures on the influence of Persian art in Chinese art by Paul Pelliot, North African art by Henri Terrasse, Early Christian art by J. Shapley, Byzantine ceramics by David Talbot Rice, Anatolian ceramics by R. M. Riefstahl, European paintings by Ernst Kühnel, Scandinavian art forms by T. J. Arne, and European architecture by Josef Strzygowski—one of Pope’s pet ideas.³⁹ In addition, a series of public lectures was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum during the run of the exhibition.

Meanwhile, Maurice Dimand (1892–1986), curator of Muhammadan art at the Metropolitan Museum, and George DuPont Pratt (1869–1935), a trustee of the Met, accused Pope of making huge profits off the sale of Persian artifacts to museums.⁴⁰ Dimand had also gone around the Persian exhibition saying that one piece after another was a fake. The Royal Academy held a ‘trial,’ and Pope was eventually cleared of all accusations, although bad blood remained

38 On the exhibition, see Wood 2000. For relative values of dollar sums, I have used the value of the consumer bundle at www.measuringworth.com (last accessed February 25, 2014).

39 The proceedings are summarized in *Surveyors*, 200–3.

40 It was alleged, for example, that Pope “purchased for the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, for something like 90,000 dollars, goods which could be purchased for 10,000 dollars” (*Surveyors*, 203). In fact, in 1930, according to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston website, it purchased from Pope ninety-five ‘Luristan’ objects, numbered 30.544–30.637 as a group for \$15,000 (perhaps \$40,000 today), plus a \$2250 (15%) commission.

between him and Dimand.⁴¹ Pope would continue to be haunted by these accusations from the academic and museum establishment. Like his contemporary Bernard Berenson (1865–1959), Pope was both an independent scholar and art dealer at a time when art history was becoming more ‘professional’ and academic under the influence of German art historians, who were beginning to flee the deteriorating political situation in Europe. In contrast to such contemporaries as the brilliant Herzfeld, who had earned a Ph.D. and knew many ancient and modern languages, the genial Pope had only a master’s degree in philosophy with a specialty in aesthetics. He knew no oriental languages and his knowledge of history was scant. His love for and knowledge of Persian art was acquired first hand. He was, in short, an *amateur*, an academic *manqué* without an academy. Instead he created his own institute.

Over the course of the 1930s Pope traveled to Iran many times to conduct nine seasons of archaeological expeditions and photograph architecture for eventual publication in the *Survey*.⁴² These trips demanded constant fundraising from such ‘angels’ as Robert Woods Bliss, Myron C. Taylor, Mrs. Christian Holmes, the Suydam Cuttings, Edward M. M. Warburg and Ada Small Moore. In early 1935, for example, Mrs. Moore sent Pope a check for \$2,500 (half her annual contribution to the Institute) which Pope said he’d “share with the boys, and [it] will provide gasoline, tires, and some of the photographic necessities that will make a real difference to the season’s work.”⁴³ The author Robert Byron (1905–41), who met Moore at tea at the American College in Tehran in 1934, describes her as “a matriarch in a shawl, more than seventy years old and worth as many millions.”⁴⁴ Christopher Sykes (1907–86), Byron’s traveling companion, was appalled at the toadying that went on by people like Pope, “whose work depends on private benefactions.”

In return for her generous support, Pope and Ackerman sold Mrs. Moore several ‘Seljuk’ silks to add to her collection. In one letter Ackerman said that a particular piece could be had for \$300 rather than the \$1,500 or \$2,000 that some dealers “would ask” for it.⁴⁵ In 1936, after Mrs. Moore had decided to

41 On ‘the trial,’ see *Surveyors*, 203–7. Many years ago, Dorothy Shepherd (1916–92), then retired curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art, told me that much of the enmity between the men was fueled by Dimand’s jealousy of Pope’s patrician good looks and his uncanny ability to cultivate New York society matrons for the Persian Institute. Dimand, a rather homely German emigré, wished to cultivate them himself for the Metropolitan Museum.

42 *Surveyors*, 213–72.

43 *Ibid.*, 238–9. For Ada Small Moore as collector, see Sensabaugh and Matheson 2002.

44 Byron 1937, 218.

45 *Surveyors*, 239.

give her textile collection to Yale, perhaps in order to help finance the further researches of her friends Ackerman and Pope, she acquired the Ackerman-Pope textile collection, which became a major part of her gift of more than one thousand Asian and Near Eastern textiles to Yale in 1937.⁴⁶ Many of the Persian silks Mrs. Moore donated to Yale turned out to be twentieth-century forgeries.⁴⁷

Over the years 1932–6, Pope mounted a series of exhibitions of his architectural photographs in London, Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow, Leningrad, Stockholm, New York, Cambridge (MA), New Haven, and Princeton. The exhibition at Princeton in the fall of 1932 so impressed the young Donald Wilber that he wrote to Pope, who was in Cairo, and volunteered his services as a trained architect. Wilber joined the American Institute team in Iran during the winter of 1934–5 and continued to be a member for the remainder of the decade.⁴⁸

Pope often traveled to Iran via the Soviet Union, especially when he was helping to plan the Third International Congress and Exhibition. Several important Russian scholars had attended the 1931 London exhibition and congress; they asked Pope's help in organizing the congress, which was held on September 10–18, 1935, moving from Leningrad to Moscow; the exhibition, held at the Hermitage in Leningrad, remained open all fall. More than twenty-five thousand objects were assembled, including Sasanian silver and Scythian gold, from all over the Soviet Union. Perhaps the largest piece displayed was the enormous bronze basin from the Shrine of Ahmad Yasavi at Turkestan City in the Kazakh SSR that had been brought specially for the purpose.⁴⁹ To arrange the congress and secure the loans, Pope had made many trips to the Soviet Union on his way to or from Iran, a fact that would later be held against him.

Much of his time over these years was spent coordinating the publication of the mammoth *Survey of Persian Art*. Indeed, two hundred color plates from the forthcoming *Survey* were exhibited in Leningrad in 1935, representing "a summary repertoire of the art of Iran which is a sort of *Einleitung* of the whole exhibit of Iran proper."⁵⁰ The American Institute (i.e. Pope) sent some six hundred photographic enlargements, plans, drawings, and elevations grouped by cities and monuments. The first two volumes of the *Survey* were initially planned to come out in 1930 with 600 pages of text and 500 illustrations to be written by some seventy scholars. It eventually appeared in 1938–39

46 Sensabaugh and Matheson 2002.

47 Blair, Bloom, and Wardwell 1992.

48 Wilber 1986, 23ff.

49 On the Third Congress, see *Surveyors*, 287–96.

50 *Ibid.*, 290.

in six enormous volumes with 2,817 pages of text, 1,287 collotype plates containing 3,500 photographs at a cost of \$340,000 (perhaps \$10.7 million today).⁵¹

As the situation in Europe declined, Pope and the American Institute were also instrumental in facilitating the immigration of many European scholars, including Richard Ettinghausen, Bernhard Geiger, Gustav von Grunebaum, William Haas, Robert von Heine-Geldern, Wolf Leslau, Ilse Liechtenstadter, Leo Oppenheim, and Edith Porada, who were forced to flee Hitler's Germany. Many of them were given positions teaching at the Institute to help them get their feet on the ground, and Porada lived in a maid's room when the Institute was at 9 East 89th Street.⁵² As the political situation precluded organizing a fourth congress, in 1940 Pope organized an exhibition entitled *Six Thousand Years of Iranian Art* in New York. Over 2,500 objects were assembled in the remarkable span of only fifty days. Since Dimand's enmity towards Pope meant that the exhibition couldn't possibly be held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the obvious location, it was held instead at the old Union Club building, an unsuitable space, according to one reviewer. Magnificent carpets, ceramics, and paintings were borrowed from private collectors and dealers, but there were no loans from museums. According to Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79), who had come to London to work with Pope on the *Survey* and eventually married Pope's secretary Basilia Gruliow, there was not always sufficient time for the elimination of "overrestored and problematical pieces."⁵³ Nevertheless, some major pieces were exhibited, such as the enormous luster tile mihrab that Doris Duke (1912–93) eventually bought for her house in Hawaii and the magnificent manuscript of Jami's *Haft Aurang* that Richard Ettinghausen would acquire in 1946 from Hagop Kevorkian for the Freer Gallery in Washington, DC.⁵⁴

During the war years when it was impossible for Pope to travel to Iran, the grand and gracious setting of the Institute provided an elegant home for Ackerman and Pope, who used to play the Steinway for select friends. Refugee professors offered classes in dozens of exotic languages, which came to be seen as increasingly important, particularly in the post-war era. From 1943 to 1949 he served as vice chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship. In 1949 Muhammad Reza Pahlavi (r. 1941–79), the new young Shah, came to New York and was the patron of a reception held at the Institute.⁵⁵

51 Ibid., 297–316. See Sheila Blair's contribution to this volume.

52 Ibid., 341–50.

53 On Ettinghausen, see *Surveyors*, 346. On the exhibition, see Ettinghausen 1940.

54 Simpson 1997, 365.

55 *Surveyors*, 368–7.

To raise money for the Institute, in the spring of 1949 Pope led a trip of sixteen distinguished and wealthy patrons to Iran, including Joseph McMullan, Robert Gardiner, Mrs. Walter Dillingham, Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, Mrs. Allen W. Dulles, Mrs. Samuel Barlow, Mrs. Alexandra Marie Brantley, Mrs. Charles B. Goodspeed, Richard Mowrer, John Donovan, and Robert Payne. The society columnist Cholly Knickerbocker sneeringly described Iran as “a country close to the Soviet Union” in the New York *Journal-American*, a Hearst newspaper, while the Soviets called the trip a spy mission by American capitalists.⁵⁶ Back in New York, Pope continued to cultivate his well-connected and rich friends to promote his and the Institute’s work. For example, in 1951, a fundraising dinner included Ralph Bunche (the Nobel laureate as UN Chief negotiator for Palestine), the explorer Suydam Cutting, and Eleanor Roosevelt.⁵⁷

With the rise of the Cold War and McCarthyism, this genteel world began to crash down around Pope. Why had he gone so often to the Soviet Union before the war? In 1949, in an article called “Red Visitors Cause Rumpus,” Henry Luce’s *Life* magazine published a picture of Pope along with such other leaders of the “non-card-carrying Communist left” as Arthur Miller, Albert Einstein, Aaron Copeland, Leonard Bernstein and Charles Chaplin.⁵⁸ Despite his denial of being a Communist, Pope soon found himself not only abandoned by his rich friends, but also deprived of the financial support that kept the Asia Institute going. He asked to be relieved of his duties at the Institute to “devote his full time to research and writing. James M. Landis, former dean of the Harvard Law School, became the Institute’s chancellor and James Michener, the author, was named president. When Pope was 71, he reluctantly abandoned New York City for a little house in Warren, a small town about 100 miles away in northwest Connecticut, where he and Ackerman would live for another fourteen years. He wrote that he “managed to buy a lovely little farmhouse in the country, where there at least is peace and beauty; and Phyllis has turned out to be a miraculous gardener.”⁵⁹

Despite their isolation, they still had frequent callers and admirers. Pope worked on various projects, including his book *Persian Architecture*, which George Braziller would eventually publish in 1965, and republication of the *Survey*. His left-wing politics remained strong, for in the autumn of 1953 he wrote to his old friend Hussein ‘Ala’ about the Mosaddegh affair, “I knew enough of the people in Anglo-Iranian to have some first-hand information

56 Ibid., 373–4.

57 Ibid., 388–9.

58 Ibid., 402.

59 Ibid., 412.

about some of their deplorable tactics; and the wealth they have extracted—much of it so unfairly—would have given Iran the resources essential to a new life.”⁶⁰ However, in the summer of 1954 Pope was called out of retirement to testify before the Subversive Activities Control Board about his activities with the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, which was believed to be a Communist front group. He said that all but three of nineteen visits he made to the Soviet Union from 1925 to 1945 were “in transit” from Iran; the three other visits were to work on art shows.⁶¹ Pope wrote in July that “we have just come through an absolutely hideous six months—much the worst I have tried to endure—that pretty nearly got us down. We have just sold some of our works of art and, as a consequence, things are a little easier—and that is an infinite help. We can go on now for four months without any real jeopardy.”⁶² In March 1956 Pope was appointed “cultural attaché of the Iranian Embassy” in appreciation of his international work making known Iranian art, and a small—and welcome—stipend was attached.⁶³

Most people would have called it quits about then, but Pope was indefatigable and had several more acts to play. The Fourth Exhibition of Iranian Art had been held in New York just before the outbreak of World War II, but there had been no possibility of an accompanying congress. Twenty years later, at the age of 79, Pope organized the delayed Fourth Congress, which was held during April and May 1960 in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, under the joint sponsorship of the US State Department, President Eisenhower and the Shah. Events included lectures on the *Andarznama*, a newly-discovered ‘Seljuk’ manuscript that was dramatically shown to be a fake, as well as a specially-commissioned ballet, *The Figure in the Carpet*, choreographed by George Balanchine (1904–83) and based on the Ardabil carpet. For the gala dinner held at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York, the Shah sent a veritable mountain of Iranian caviar, but much of it mysteriously disappeared along with the promised wine before it reached the diners’ plates and glasses, leading to threats of lawsuits for breach of contract.⁶⁴

Learning of plans for the impending celebration of the 2,500th Anniversary of the Persian Empire to be held at Persepolis, Pope offered the Shah detailed (and unsolicited) suggestions for including souvenir gifts for the attendees

60 Ibid., 412. Pope’s attitude is particularly odd, considering that Donald Wilber was instrumental in organizing the CIA’s campaign against Mosaddegh. See Wilber 1986.

61 *New York Times*, July 29, 1954.

62 *Surveyors*, 413.

63 Ibid., 414.

64 Ibid., 425–6.

and even proposed making a film, *Cyrus in Babylon*, about Cyrus the Great and the birth of the Persian empire.⁶⁵ In 1964 the Shah came on a state visit to the US and to attend the exhibition *7000 years of Iranian Art*, which had been organized by Richard Ettinghausen at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. Ettinghausen's relationship with Pope and Ackerman had been cool for some years, but it was somewhat of a surprise that Pope, who had virtually awakened Americans' interest in Persian art, was not involved in an *ex officio* capacity nor was he invited to the opening. The dealer Karekin Beshir (1893–1969) nastily quipped that “everyone who had ever walked on a Persian rug” except Pope had been invited to the openings at the Freer Gallery in Washington and Asia House in New York.⁶⁶ Perhaps people thought that at 83, Pope was finished.

At the end of his visit to the US, however, the Shah presented Pope with the Order of Humayun in recognition that he had “revived our history with all its glory.”⁶⁷ The Shah invited Pope to return to Iran for a “farewell visit,” a first-class all-expenses-paid “Cinderella dream trip for retired impecunious scholars,” which they began in October 1964 with a visit to Paris and Shah Karim Hussaini Aga Khan IV (1936–).⁶⁸ In Iran, Pope was given an honorary doctorate at the University of Tehran, and they traveled in style to Isfahan and Shiraz, accompanied by translators, nurses, wheelchairs, etc. This was, incredibly, Phyllis Ackerman's first trip to Iran, presumably because she was so crippled by polio. Eventually the Shah invited Pope and Ackerman to move to Shiraz along with the Asia Institute, which would move in the spring of 1965 to Narenjestan, the beautiful Qajar-era house in Shiraz.⁶⁹ Pope and Ackerman were given another house in Shiraz, to which they moved permanently in 1966. Two years later in April 1968, at the age of 87, Pope served as president of the Fifth Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in Tehran, the first to be held in Iran. Nearly 300 Iranologists from over thirty countries attended, a fitting tribute to the man who had come up with the idea of the first congress forty-two years earlier in Philadelphia. He continued to run the Asia Institute until the spring of 1969, when he held a colloquium on problems of Persian art and passed the baton to the young Iranologist Richard N. Frye (1920–2014). Pope died on September 3, 1969. Following a funeral in Shiraz and a big obituary in the *New York Times*, he was buried in a brick mausoleum in Isfahan on the banks of the Ziyanda

65 Ibid., 427–34.

66 Ibid., 346.

67 *New York Times*, June 15, 1964.

68 *Surveyors*, 451.

69 Ibid., 461.

Rud near the Khwaju Bridge. Ackerman continued to live in Shiraz for another eight years until her death in 1977. She was buried alongside him.

There can be no question that Pope truly loved Iran and Persian art. A man of the nineteenth century, he was an old-fashioned amateur without academic training or affiliation in an age when those qualifications became increasingly important. Unlike his better-educated European contemporaries, he knew no foreign languages, but he was able to charm and cajole people into supporting his work and he got things done. During his extremely long and productive life, the rules changed, often as an indirect result of his own activities promoting interest in Iran. Despite his many faults and failings, he never enriched himself, but his enthusiasm certainly enriched the lives of many others. He could have done much worse.

The question remains whether Pope knew that some, if not many, of the pieces that passed through his and Ackerman's hands, such as Luristan bronzes and 'Buyid' silks, quite apart from the Alp Arslan Salver or the manuscript of the *Andarznama*, were pastiches or forgeries. For example, Pope claimed to have acquired the salver in 1933 from an "unidentified Russian private collection" and sold it in the following year to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. It is difficult to believe that he could be so willfully naïve about the provenance of so many works of art that passed through his hands, and that he must have realized that many of his dealer friends were using him. Nevertheless, whatever the truth of these accusations and innuendoes, Pope never grew personally wealthy from his dealing—all his money went to support the Institute, his trips to Iran, and eventually the publication of the *Survey*.

As Charles K. Wilkinson (1897–1986), who succeeded Dimand and preceded Ettinghausen as curator of Islamic art at the Metropolitan Museum, wrote of his friend, "Arthur lived in a world which has mostly passed away. It was one in which, for example, commercial digging was allowed by the antiquities law of Iran of the early 1930s under certain rules, restrictions, and enforced terminations by the archaeological service of Iran. Implications as to motives of a man long dead, and active in a different world are not likely to be very accurate when made by one of a much later generation with an entirely different background and point of view. Hindsight can be directed in many ways depending on what purpose one wants to serve."⁷⁰

70 Ibid., 170.

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FIGURE 5.1 *Pope and Schmidt at Tepe Hissar in 1932, photographed by Edward M. M. Warburg (AFTER SURVEYORS, 229).*

Archaeology in Iran and the Experience of Arthur Upham Pope

Donald Whitcomb

While there have been many studies examining the contribution to ‘art history’ of Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969), this paper will explore the interpretations of the concept of ‘archaeology’ in the 1920s and 1930s as a positive contribution toward his legacy. The career of A. U. Pope in Iran, from 1925 to 1969, encompasses many of the early stages in the development of modern archaeological methodology, especially as distinct from that of art history. The distinction is important and complex; for instance, Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79) has noted the ‘special problem’ afforded the mass of archaeological information. “It was not possible to include all this information, and we chose our examples . . . from among works of some aesthetic or historical merit, leaving to others or to other occasions the task of assessing the immense documentation provided by archaeology.”¹ It is easy to admire earlier times when field scholarship encompassed all aspects of material culture.

Archaeology in Iran began with the French concession from 1900 until 1929 which focused on the ancient site of Susa in the province of Khuzistan. This monopoly began to break down with the rise of Reza Khan (Reza Shah Pahlavi; r. 1925–41) and the advent of Pope in Tehran; the pivotal event was the dramatic influence of Pope’s lecture on the glories of ancient Iranian art and its people in 1925.² The change in governmental policies is well documented, as is the opening for new archaeological ventures and for the personal activities of Pope. The nature of Pope’s conception of ‘archaeology’ in this period may be understood by examining the close and enduring friendship of Pope with Erich F. Schmidt (1897–1964; fig. 5.1). While Pope was establishing himself as a consultant on Iranian art in New York (and elsewhere), Schmidt was studying with the great anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942) at Columbia University; there is no indication whether the two might have met there in the early 1920s.

1 See Ettinghausen et al. 2001, VII.

2 The lecture was translated in Persian by Issa Sadiq, “Past and future of Persian art”; a revised version was published as “Persian art and culture” (Pope 1928); see Sadiq 1972, and more generally Grigor 2009.

Schmidt did his dissertation on a sequence of prehistoric pottery in Arizona; there he learned the most modern of scientific excavation techniques, and a wide appreciation of cultural periods, as well as ethnographic observations.

It is not clear how Schmidt came to the attention of James Henry Breasted (1865–1935) who made him co-director of the excavations at Alishar Huyuk and Kerkenes dagh in Anatolia. Schmidt's account of this expedition is equally comfortable with discussions of the prehistoric, the Hittite, and the Roman, not ignoring the most recent Seljuk and Ottoman remains. Upon receiving his doctorate in 1929, he was employed by the University Museum of Pennsylvania to excavate briefly at Fara in northern Mesopotamia and then to move to Iran for excavations at Tepe Hissar near Damghan in northeastern Iran.³ Schmidt established a sequence of early periods at Tepe Hissar from 1931 to 1933. He placed soundings in the citadel and in the courtyard of an early Islamic mosque (the Tari [Tarikh] Khana, fig. 5.2) in Damghan. At the same time, he excavated a nearby Sasanian palace with fine stucco decorations.

Pope in the meantime had used his new influence with Reza Shah to gain entry into mosques and begin the photographic documentation for which he is so famed. When he founded the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology (hereafter AIPAA) in 1928, he was also associated with Philadelphia and his institute became a sponsor of the Hissar project. Indeed, it would seem that he intended the AIPAA to become the automatic sponsor of all archaeological research in Iran (not unlike the intent of some more recent national institutes in Middle Eastern countries). Pope states in his announcement of the AIPAA in 1930: "Our knowledge of most of these periods is still painfully meager. [It has] resulted from the excavations of totally unskilled people who have in the process destroyed the evidence that would have been of value to the trained archaeologist."⁴ The model for this new archaeology was no doubt observed in the fieldwork of Schmidt. The architectural survey was the first, and for many scholars the fundamental, contribution of Pope to Iranian art. The recovery of ancient architectural monuments through fieldwork points to a fundamental distinction between art history (focused on individual monuments) and archaeology (perhaps best characterized as the study of cumulative cultural patterns). This wider purpose of archaeology is acknowledged by Pope when he notes, with some frustration, "...excavations undertaken expressly for architectural purposes may yield important information, but as yet the remains of only a very few buildings of interest have been disclosed."⁵

3 See Schmidt 1937.

4 See *Surveyors*, 145–6.

5 See SPA, III, 898.



FIGURE 5.2 *Schmidt's excavations in the Tari (Tarikh) Khana mosque*
(AFTER SCHMIDT 1937, FIG. 9).

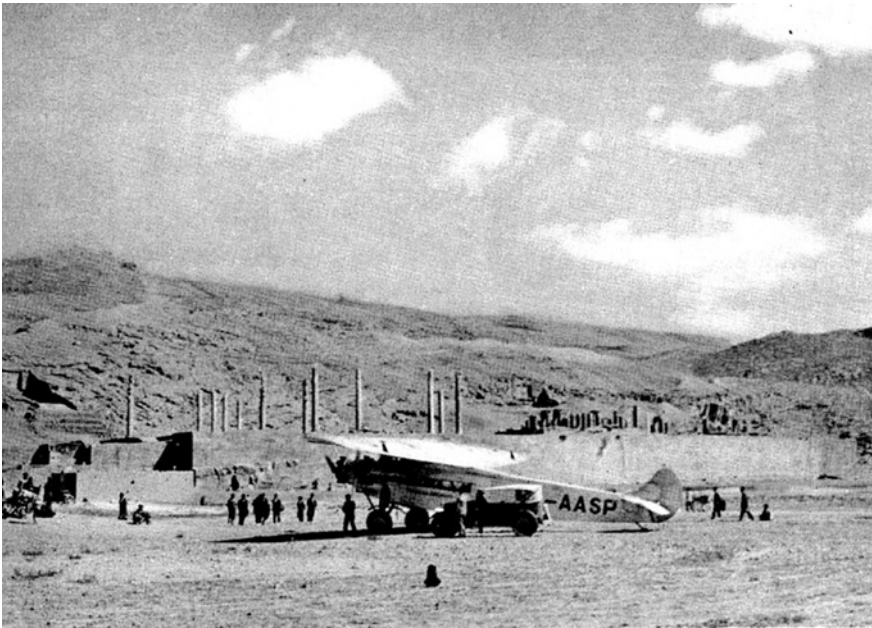


FIGURE 5.3 *Breasted's airplane at Persepolis in 1932*
(AFTER BREASTED 1933, 16).

The AIPAA also sponsored the early excavations of Frederick Wulsin (1891–1961) in 1929–30 at Tureng tepe in northeastern Iran (and published in the *Bulletin of the AIPAA*). During these same years, Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) had brief campaigns at Pasargadae and Kuh-i Khwaja; the eminence of this scholar in philology and fieldwork was well established since his work in Mesopotamia and especially Samarra some thirty years earlier. The grand prize within Iranian archaeology was the Achaemenid capital of Persepolis in Fars province. Herzfeld had surveyed the famous site in 1924 for the Iranian government and so, when the ‘restoration and excavation’ of Persepolis was awarded to the Oriental Institute, Breasted appointed Herzfeld as its director (fig. 5.3). Herzfeld’s work comprised clearance of “disintegrated adobé walls” beneath which he discovered “the several pairs of monumental stairways... embellished with superb reliefs... depicting a *darbar* or procession of tribute bearers.”⁶ Moreover, this imperial art was interpreted as the product of some 3,500 years of cultural development in Iran and, as Charles Breasted expressed it, “... the task of recovering the evidence and interpreting it is the responsibility of Western archaeological science.”⁷

The grafting of ‘science’ onto an historical narrative began in this period but had its roots in the earliest archaeological efforts of Pope and other early archaeologists. Field research at Persepolis would grow as a scientific discipline under Schmidt from 1935 through 1937, though the enterprise continued to be validated with the discovery of artistic treasures, whether buildings or collections of artifacts (Schmidt’s efforts in the ‘treasury building’ at Persepolis is perhaps symptomatic of this enduring aspect of research).

While Herzfeld worked for Breasted at Persepolis, Schmidt undertook excavations at Ray, the ancient Rhages immediately south of modern Tehran from 1934 until 1936. Pope expressed great hopes that he would uncover Islamic ceramics and the kilns of their production. For his own part, Pope surveyed architectural monuments in this same region. Thus Donald Wilber (1907–97) recounts how “several days were spent in recording mosques, shrines and tomb towers in the vicinity of Tehran, such as Ray, Varamin and Demavand villages.” He then adds:

Arthur pursued one important scholarly interest. This was his continuing effort to identify centers of ceramic production from the eleventh century on by the collection of sherds from every site and place we visited, in

6 See Breasted 1933, 15.

7 *Ibid.*, 11.

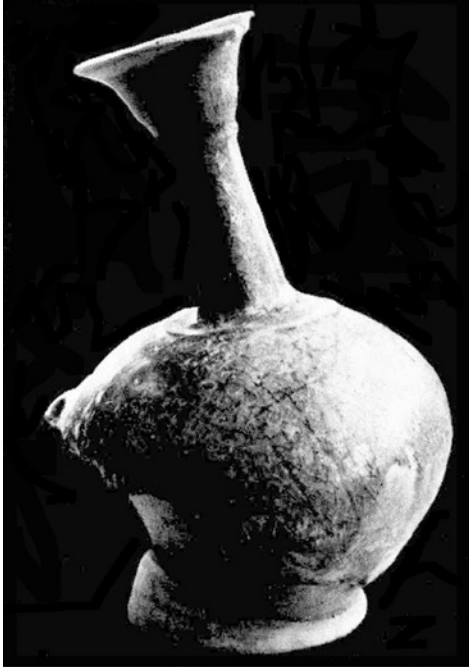


FIGURE 5.4
Ceramic waster from Kashan
 (AFTER POPE 1937A, 165, FIG. 15).

particular sherds that were ‘wasters’ . . . Sherds piled up in his room at the hotel . . . [and later he adds] The rest of us continued our work the following day amid a stream of people bringing in sherds to show Arthur.⁸

Pope was eloquent on the virtues of wasters, spoilt vessels without commercial value and therefore discarded near the production site; this was for him “... a cornerstone of archaeological research.”⁹ He would later demonstrate the use of wasters for defining Kashan wares (fig. 5.4).¹⁰ He would continually emphasize that such collections were secondary to “scientifically controlled excavation,” for which he would cite Samarra, Susa, Damghan, Stein’s surveys in Fars, and especially Schmidt’s excavations at Ray.¹¹

On the value of ceramics, Pope’s strong view was that “utility may have been an excuse, but beauty was their reason and purpose.” The potter’s “... wares . . . reached every home, and all save those for the poorest customers

8 See Wilber 1986, 75, 77.

9 See SPA, IV, 1462.

10 See Pope 1937A, 161–6.

11 See SPA, IV, 1462.

had some pretensions to beauty.”¹² This hyperbole may have been truly believed:

“If,” writes Miss Day, “Persia is like other countries in the Near East, unglazed fragments must be strewn over every ruined site and tell.” Well, Persia is not like other countries of the Near East . . . and not one in ten thousand of the surface shards on the main sites is unglazed except, of course, for an occasional run of course kitchen wares or other crudely executed utility vessels.¹³

Certainly Pope had walked across enough archaeological sites to know this not to be true (fig. 5.5); glazed sherds generally account for only 2–5% of the ceramic remains. On the other hand, there was a survey in Jordan which claimed 40% of the sherds were glazed; this might be explained in the sampling technique, that this was percentage picked up.¹⁴ This may be equivalent to Ernst Grube (1932–2011)’s claim that “. . . ninety per cent of Fatimid ceramic wares are decorated with lustre painting,” which may rather be an indication of the proportions displayed in museums.¹⁵ Later, Goode reports that “Pope admonished Schmidt not to be so quick and dogmatic with his opinions regarding the age *and authenticity* of ceramics,” that he should “study [his] ceramics more carefully.”¹⁶

Another example of the influence of Pope on Schmidt was their mutual interest in the problem of Luristan bronzes, which came to collectors’ attention after 1929. Pope used his influence with Iranian officials for permissions, especially for flights into this region, and for raising funds through the AIPAA. Schmidt’s Holmes expeditions, first in 1934–5 and again in 1938, resulted in the immensely successful excavations at Surkh Dum-i-Luri.¹⁷ These seasons of excavations bracketed the program of ‘Flights over the Ancient Cities of Iran,’ actually facilitated by the near simultaneous excavations at Rayy, Persepolis, and Luristan.¹⁸ The Bulletin for 1937 includes Pope’s report on Takht-i Sulayman with Schmidt’s air photo (fig. 5.6), a discussion of historical documentation of

12 See SPA, IV, 1448.

13 See Pope 1942, 190–1.

14 See King et al., 1987, 456–7.

15 See Grube 1976, 126.

16 See Goode 2007, 180 (*italics added*). On Schmidt’s attention to the ceramics from Rayy, one may now refer to Treptow 2007.

17 See Schmidt 1938.

18 See Schmidt 1940.



FIGURE 5.5 *Sorting sherds in the Istakhr excavations in 1937*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO,
P. 57947).



FIGURE 5.6 *Airphoto of Takht-i Sulayman by Erich F. Schmidt*
(AFTER POPE 1937B, 74).

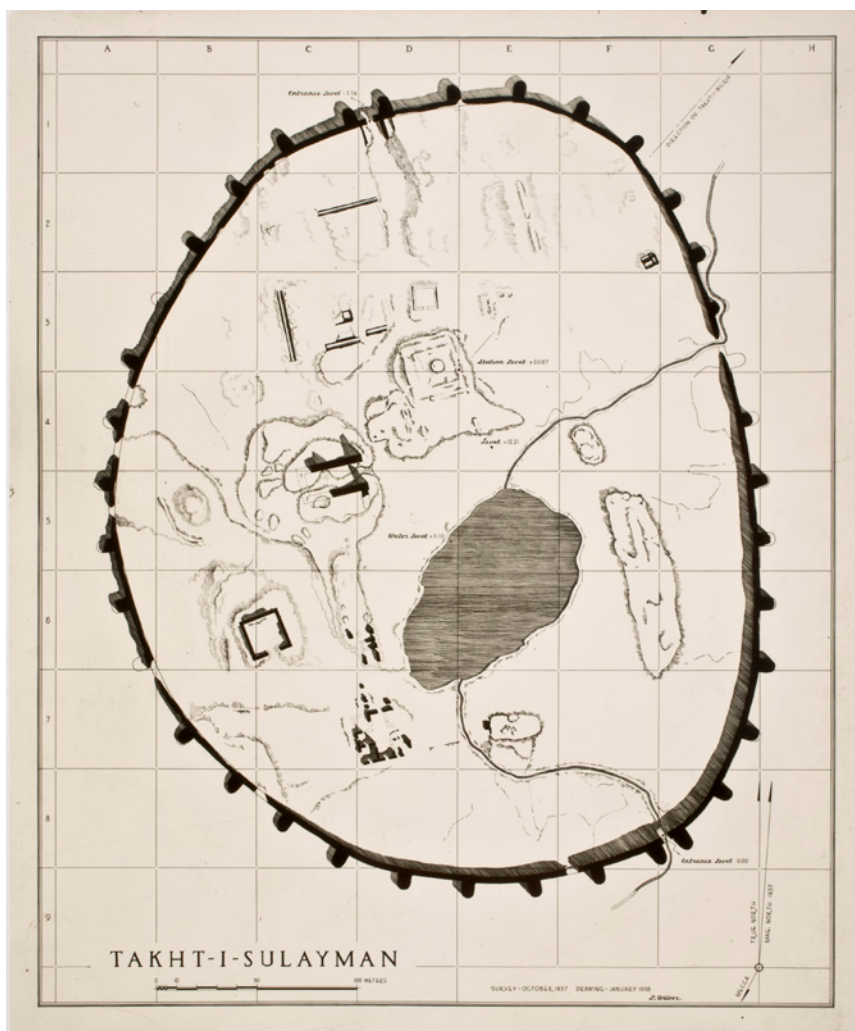


FIGURE 5.7 *Plan of the site of Takht-i Sulayman by Donald N. Wilber. Digital Images & Slides Collection (FryeTakht-iSul.o8, AKP034), Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

Shiz by Mary Crane, and Donald Wilber's observations of the Ilkhanid buildings and plan of the site (fig. 5.7); the report reflects a mature synthesis of archaeological information.¹⁹

When Schmidt replaced Herzfeld at Persepolis in 1935 he continued the work on the platform of Takht-i Jamshid, the prehistoric sites of Tal-i Bakun, and Islamic Istakhr that Herzfeld had begun; he was very careful to avoid digging in the same exact areas that Herzfeld had begun. These two archaeologists were worlds apart in background and temperament. Herzfeld was some twenty years the senior and a noted philologist and architectural historian; contemporary art historians, among them Pope, would seem to be considered distinctly 'lesser lights' beside his scholarship.

Schmidt's emphasis on stratigraphic contextual recording brought a totally new scientific approach, as mentioned earlier. This is no better exemplified than by the urban settlement at Istakhr, the Sasanian and early Islamic successor to Persepolis. Here he carefully excavated deep trenches, hoping for a sequence which would tie the Achaemenians to these latter periods (which unfortunately eluded him). Flying over Istakhr, Schmidt used his airplane to map the site and reveal details of its urban organization; the most complete realization of the potential of these photographs would need to wait some forty more years when they revealed outlines of the early Islamic city.²⁰ The site of Istakhr remains unpublished, yet the records are staggering in their complete information; the precise coordinates of every artifact, and even important sherds, remain available for a study of the archaeology of this early Islamic city.

Though Schmidt and Pope seem to have remained good friends and plotted new projects together until the war, he must have been uncomfortable with Pope's repeated statements that should be anathema today. In his introduction to Islamic period ceramics, Pope notes a debt "... particularly [to] M. Rabenou whose participation in excavating at many sites had made it possible for him to provide detailed information which has been repeatedly confirmed."²¹ This remained a key component in Pope's methodology: "Much can be learned from the investigation of sites already commercially excavated, for in these one finds masses of fragments of no market, but some evidential, value."

19 See Pope 1937B and Wilber 1937.

20 See Whitcomb 1979.

21 See Pope in SPA, IV, 1446, n. 1.

As one adept to such associations, he gives strong caveats but concludes that testimony of commercial excavations and dealers provides evidence that “has been underestimated . . . and much neglected.”²²

The *senmurv* (simorgh) of the Art Institute of Chicago might be considered in this context. The piece was acquired and published by Pope as coming from Chal Tarkhan near Rayy.²³ Thompson publishes identical roundels with *senmurvs* from the excavations of the main palace of Chal Tarkhan in 1936.²⁴ She notes that many early stuccoes were acquired by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among which is a panel with such roundels (fig. 5.8).²⁵ It is curious then that the history of archaeological research in Iran by Ezat Negahban (1926–2009) should list Pope as the excavator of Chal Tarkhan in 1936, though there is no other record.²⁶ In any case, it was Negahban’s initiative during the Fifth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in 1968 which produced a statement of official disapproval of the trade in antiquities. This led to the end of commercial archaeology and beginning a new phase of modern archaeology in Iran.²⁷

Postscript

To end on a personal note, while I served with the American Peace Corps in Iran, I began working for A. U. Pope in 1968 and lived at the Narenjestan while it was being renovated. Pope referred to me as his ‘archaeological scout,’ sending me to villages to check on information brought to him. One of these tips led to my first published article on Achaemenid remains found near Sivand, north of Persepolis.²⁸ What I remember is a very elderly gentleman, full of charm and grace; his discussions of Iran and its arts were still charismatic. I well remember his explanation of Persepolis as a ‘ritual city,’²⁹ which many now criticize,

22 Ibid., 1463.

23 AIC 1926–1196; see SPA, IV, pl. 177F.

24 See Thompson 1976, pl. IV, 3.

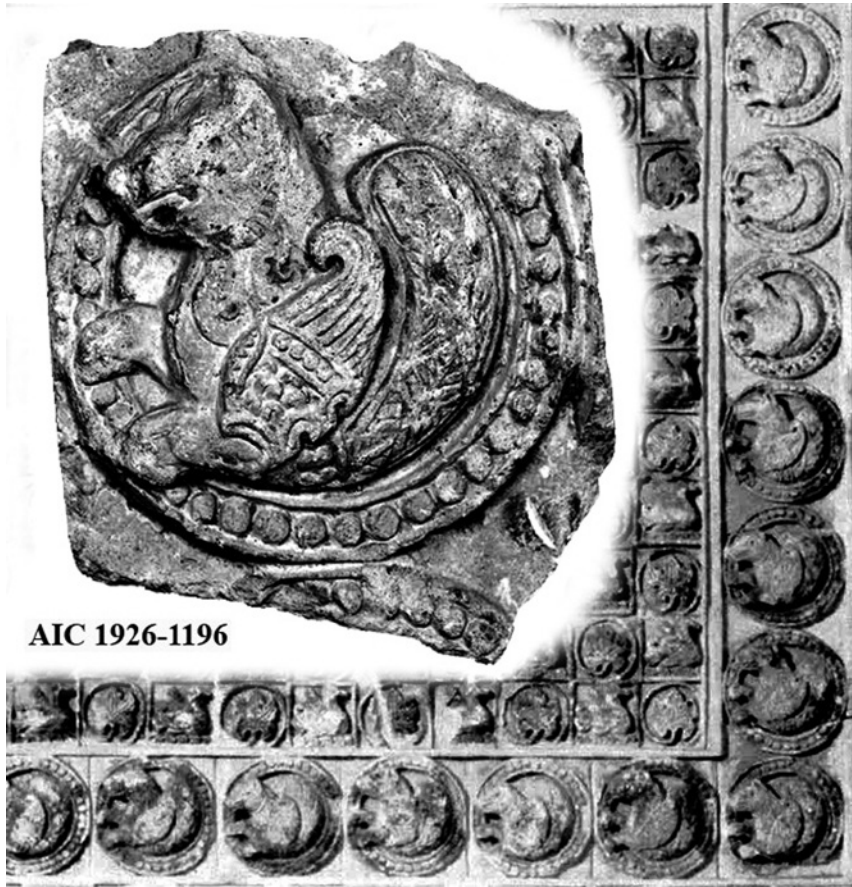
25 Ibid., xi, pl. XXIII, 1, 1929–132–1; she traces other examples in note 40.

26 See Negahban 1998, 487, #39.

27 See Negahban 1969, 10; Pope was present and vigorously opposed this great change in accepted archaeological practice.

28 See Whitcomb 1969.

29 See Pope 1957.



AIC 1926-1196

FIGURE 5.8 *Panel of senmurvs from Chal Tarkhan and the Art Institute of Chicago example*
(AFTER THOMPSON 1976, PL. XXIII.I AND AIC 1926-1196).

though I believe it ought to have been so, on the strength of the rhetoric of Arthur Upham Pope.

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FIGURE 6.1 *Gunbad-i Qabus, photographed by Pope*
(AFTER POPE 1965A, FIG. 82).

Arthur Upham Pope and the Study of Persian Islamic Architecture

Bernard O'Kane

Under the shadow of the Elburz mountains, facing the vastness of the Asian steppes, there stands in stark majesty a supreme architectural masterpiece, the Gunbad-i Qabus, the tomb tower of Qabus ibn Washmgir. From its spreading plinth to the top of its conical roof, it rises a full 167 feet, with another 35 feet or so underground. It is built of time-defying hard-fired brick, now bronze and golden tan in colour. The interior dome, now turned greenish-blue, is covered with tightly-fitted bricks, in order to fit exactly the inward sloping areas of the walls. On the exterior, ten powerful right-angled flanges project from the circular body, vertically uniting base and roof. Kufic inscription panels between each flange (both at the top and near the bottom of the tower) tell us that it was built by Qabus in 1006–7. Except for these inscription panels and the flanges, the monument is totally bare of ornament.

Qabus was an extraordinary man, ruling Gurgan intermittently from 976 to about 1012. A scholar and patron of scholars, a poet and patron of poets, a calligrapher, astrologer, linguist, chess player and doughty warrior, he was also unreasonably suspicious and, in the end was assassinated by his exasperated nobles. His life was such as to engender a longing for security and repose, as well as defiance of fate—all qualities eloquently expressed in the design of this monument. It owes its power to great height and bleak singularity, to the sheer concentration on simple mass and powerful form which allows no argument or distraction. The structure is stripped clean, a warrior in mortal combat with Fate, as it were, a monarch-poet wrestling with eternity. Solemn, formidable, it makes an affirmation of death and death defied. Is there any monument so expressive, so compelling?

This passage, from the 1965 work by Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) entitled *Persian Architecture*,¹ is a good illustration of some of the strengths of Pope's

1 Pope 1965A, 86.

work, and a little of the weaknesses. Its weaknesses? Perhaps a slight disregard for details—the plan published in the *Survey* shows that the flanges are not right-angled,² and although André Godard (1881–1965) claimed that the bricks of the outer shell were moulded for its conical shape,³ it is unlikely that anyone examined the interior dome in sufficient detail to verify that the same holds for it, as Pope claimed.

Its strengths? Pope gives an appropriate amount of historical background and information on the patron, but its most striking quality is its eloquence, a characteristic of Pope that no listener to his lectures, whether to undergraduates or to the public, would fail to mention. This eloquence seemed to have carried over into all aspects of his work, as a raconteur on fieldtrips in Iran with his co-expeditionists, and in his work as a tour guide for wealthy patrons, conscious that funding of his various projects was at least partially dependent on his ability to fire his guests with the same enormous enthusiasm that he felt for his subject.

The illustration of the monument in the book (fig. 6.1)⁴ is an excellent sample of Pope's photographic talents. It is a much stronger photo than that published in the *Survey*,⁵ with the flanges clearly delineated in the strong sunshine, showing the use of an orange or red filter darkening the sky sufficiently to bring out the roiling clouds in the background, heightening its celestial affinities.

Pope's book on Persian architecture (published when he was 84) contained chapters newly written by him on the pre-Islamic material and on early Islamic architecture; material that was composed by other authors in the *Survey*. His chapter on Safavid architecture was a summary of his earlier work, and provided an opportunity to tinker with the text, producing a revised description of the tilework on the dome of the Shaikh Lutfallah mosque, where "midnight blue and white arabesques wheel majestically over a café-au-lait colour ground." The reality is more prosaic, as the café-au-lait ground is in fact unglazed brick, rather than the glazed tile that Pope's text seems to imply, but in conveying the overall feel and contrast of the colors his description is apt and memorable.

But the danger with Pope was that he would go over the top, as evidenced in this passage:

No one in a receptive or contemplative mood can enter this abode of felicity without a shock of mild surprise and the sense of being received

² SPA, 945, fig. 323.

³ Ibid., 973.

⁴ Pope 1965A, 87.

⁵ SPA, pl. 337.

into a Presence passing that of human beings. For all its elegance and finish it has naught of weakness; the scale is too ample, the patterns too strong. Like the inspired architecture it is, it imposes its own mood, wins a surrender which is a release into that magic equipoise between simulation and repose that is the essence of the aesthetic, as of the religious experience.⁶

This is also a description of the Shaikh Luftallah mosque, but while it amply conveys his enthusiasm for its architecture, which is certainly of exceptional quality, it is questionable whether it advances our understanding of the building in any way.

The reviews of the *Survey* give an opportunity to revisit some of these issues. In particular, that of Meyer Schapiro (1904–96) in the *Art Bulletin* pinpointed some of the problems of Pope's approach.⁷ Schapiro was not a specialist in Eastern art, and did not attempt to critique interpretations of individual works. He began his review by praise of the endeavor, noting that "of the 2800 pages of text a considerable part consists of fresh, first-hand contributions which could be reprinted as independent monographs. The sections on architecture, for example, are more detailed than any single monographic book on the same fields, and constitute in themselves the most comprehensive and informative treatment of their subjects today, with many drawings, photographs and documents reproduced for the first time."

However, he also noted that "throughout the *Survey* there is a tendency to regard value-judgments of skill, naturalism, and relative adherence to rules of art as adequate interpretations of style." Schapiro mentions the inconsistency of Pope's approach, where in one passage he asserts that "Persian art throughout its whole history has been distinguished by clarity and exactness" and in another admires its ornament for "its unfathomable complexity." The latter quote is from a passage about the mihrab of the Varamin Friday mosque, which I will return to shortly. Schapiro continues, "it is not evident in singling out these virtues of Persian art he is describing qualities he expects in all great art or qualities peculiar to the best Persian work of all periods." Schapiro also comments on Pope's assertion that "The geometric ornament of Iran is not the product of mere craftsmen, but, in the finer examples, is evidently the direct issue of mathematical discipline."

6 SPA, 1191.

7 Schapiro 1941.

This is a controversy that has more modern resonances,⁸ but Schapiro's comments may be no less relevant now that they were then: "are we to suppose the Persian artisans, unlike those of other countries, were trained in the methods of mathematical proof?... It would indeed be interesting to know how much mathematical knowledge was used in laying out the patterns or in deriving new ones and to what extent the devices of layout required more than the ruler and compass constructions of modern ornamental designers and craftsmen."

Schapiro aptly sums up by concluding that "all this solemn talk about logic, mathematics, Reality and the Ultimate is only a rhetorical expression of their [i.e. the editors'] enthusiasm for Persian ornament."

The passage on the mihrab at Varamin from which an extract was quoted by Schapiro is interesting for the ambivalence of Pope's comments, and for this reason it worth looking at more closely. First come the words of praise:

The mihrab, a *tour de force* in carved stucco, was obviously planned to overwhelm the worshipper. It would sustain many hours of intense study. Closely packed arabesques of large size, pierced with a variety of minute diaper patterns, seem to turn and move upon themselves. Ribbons of angular Kufic wind in and out in a more excited flutter. One becomes easily lost in contemplation. The symmetries are concealed, the complexities unfathomable. A very broad frame of wide white Kufic all but succeeds in controlling this immense stirring mass of pattern.⁹

The second paragraph, however, starts to retract this praise: "But the great moment has passed. The effort has been far too self-conscious, the work of a calculating virtuoso, and even the powerful looking Kufic script proves on examination to be weak and ambiguous at all the critical points that are decisive in a genuinely great calligraphy."

Pope never goes on to explain in what way it is weak, what ambiguity might mean in the visual analysis of a script, or what the decisive critical points might be. To my eyes at least, this is an exceptionally fine example of Ilkhanid Kufic (fig. 6.2), and many fine examples are known. But the conclusion of the paragraph helps to explain the lurch from praise to disparagement: "This was the effort of another age, the fifteenth century, attempting to improve on the fourteenth, and in this medium unduly enamored of complication, extravagance, and proud display of technical skill." It is true that the plaster mihrab

8 The most thorough recent study of this controversial topic is Allen 2004.

9 SPA, 1096.



FIGURE 6.2 *Detail of Kufic inscription, mihrab, Varamin Friday Mosque*
(PHOTOGRAPH © BERNARD O'KANE).

does partly conceal patterned brick, but this is now thought to be more likely a case of Ilkhanid builders changing their mind than an addition by the Timurid amir Yusuf Khvaja in 1441, who added an actually rather plain inscription panel in the qibla aivan at that date.¹⁰

Creswell (Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell; 1879–1974), in the *Burlington Magazine*, reviewed the architectural pages of the *Survey*, and concluded the section on Islamic architecture as follows:

It runs to over 500 pages with nearly 300 collotypes of brilliant quality, nearly all the work of the Editor. The mass of material, a great part of it new, is overwhelming and one can say without hesitation that it represents the greatest advance in our knowledge of the Muslim architecture of Persia ever accomplished in one work, and this is largely due to the Editor himself, who has broken the ice and succeeded in getting permission, not only for himself, but for those coming after him to enter mosques hitherto closed to non-Muslims.¹¹

¹⁰ O'Kane 1984, 67–68.

¹¹ Creswell 1940, 31. I had often wondered why Creswell himself never made it to Iran, but knowing that it was only in 1929 that Pope succeeded in getting non-Muslims permission to enter mosques, his reluctance is more understandable.

He thus judiciously lauds Pope's achievements as a photographer, as an author and compiler of a vast amount of new material and as a statesman in getting Reza Shah (r. 1925–41) to open mosques to non-Muslims. I will return to Creswell's evaluation at the conclusion.

The review of the Survey that one might have expected to find right away, however, was that of Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970). Smith first appears as the secretary of the newly founded American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology in 1930, and in its first *Bulletin* of 1931 for a report and a small notice on Astarabad.¹² But by 1933 he had set up on his own, studying the Isfahan Friday mosque until 1937 with a grant from the American Council for Learned Societies. A letter in 1936 from Ada Moore (1858–1955) to Pope says “your letter in regard to the disturbances in Persian of the group headed by Myron Smith over there interested me, of course . . . It seems absurd that there should be any sort of credence given to him.”¹³

What specifically occasioned the split is unclear, but it was obviously acrimonious. Certainly, it would be hard to find a greater contrast to the effusive nature of Pope's writings on architecture with the dryness, verging on aridity, of Smith's,¹⁴ although Smith's articles, unlike Pope's,¹⁵ are still essential reading.

Schroeder (Eric Schroeder; 1904–71), in his response to Godard's review of his contribution to the Survey, noted that Smith never referred to any of Pope's publications in his own articles.¹⁶ In fact Smith had fired his first salvo in his review of Creswell's *Early Muslim Architecture*. Smith wrote:

The study of Islamic architectural history stood in need of a severe discipline. Whereas a digging archaeologist and his staff, for several decades, at least, have been obliged to meet minimum requirements of competence and intellectual honesty before taking over a site, any person who slept one night under a roof—acquiring, by such incubation, familiarity

12 Smith 1931.

13 *Surveyors*, 240.

14 Perhaps not out of place here is an anecdote related to me by the late Oleg Grabar, who in his youth in the 1960s had invited Smith to his university to give a lecture on Iranian architecture. Smith had embarrassed his host by holding forth about the phallic nature of minarets, and during the lecture the host leaned over to another colleague and whispered “Myron Dement Smith,” only to be countered by “no, Myron Cement Smith.”

15 For example, Pope's article, written towards the end of his life, on the aesthetic character of the Isfahan Jami north dome for the Creswell *Festschrift* (Pope 1965B) offers no new information about the monument, merely reaffirming his gift for descriptive eloquence.

16 Schroeder 1942, 217.

with architectural forms and construction methods as well as with the pertinent problems of architectural history—might style himself an architectural historian and set out on an “expedition.” Against such travesty on scholarship Creswell’s work stands in cold rebuke.¹⁷

We may note in passing that in 1931 Smith had become a registered architect.¹⁸ Further on, Smith writes:

In the first volume of this work Creswell served the “Persian origins” partisans a dish of rather cold crow in his assertion of the Syrian origin of the pointed arch . . . showing that ‘ . . . the evolution already begun in Syria in the second half of the sixth century had scarcely begun in Persia at the end of the eighth.’ That withering statement concerning the simple, two-centered arch should spoil the appetites of the Persian Gothicists for all time, but to make doubly sure, Creswell adds, as ad nauseam sauce, the non-Persian origin of the four-centered arch, the arch whose classic profile we have heard extolled in Ruskinian rhapsody as the supreme expression of Persia’s architectural genius.¹⁹

Ironically, the subject of this exchange, the Raqqa gate, was dated by Creswell to the ‘Abbasid period, but is now thought much more likely to be twelfth century work by the patron Nur al-Din.²⁰ Finally, Smith notes that Creswell’s lack of references to aesthetic values in his text “does not stamp the author as insensitive to them; rather it seems to imply that, in his opinion, architectural history is not a branch of belle-lettres.”²¹

The tone became even more rancorous with Smith’s review of *Ilkhanid Architecture* by Donald Wilber (1907–97) in 1956. Both Wilber and Smith had in the meantime acquired PhDs, Smith’s on Persian vaulting in 1947 from Johns Hopkins, and Wilber’s in 1949 from Princeton on the subject of his book. But Smith’s publishing output, so prolific in the 30s when he was doing his field-work in Iran, had all but dried up subsequently, and jealousy may go a long way to explaining the acerbity of his review.

17 Smith 1942, 180.

18 See <http://sirius-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!283688~!o#focus> (accessed February 23, 2014).

19 Smith 1942, 180.

20 Hillenbrand 1985.

21 Smith 1942, 185.

In passing he refers to "one of several contributions to the *Survey of Persian Art* that were withdrawn," and his concluding paragraph contains the following: "what a contrast between this Soviet activity and American interest in the Islamic architecture of Iran, which began with such fanfare over two decades ago, worked up to the typographical magnificence of the *Survey of Persian Art*, and then petered out to its present trickle . . . The time is too late for the further amusement of dowagers, nor is it enough nowadays to impress Near Eastern politicians."²²

That this was a broadside at Pope is illustrated by the rejoinder to Smith's review, written not by Wilber but by Pope himself, in the same journal the next year.²³ Pope accused Smith of being handicapped by an animus, and corrected Smith's assertion that any articles had been withdrawn from the *Survey*. He mentions that "the Oriental Institute's excavations at Persepolis were financed by a woman benefactor, but the Institute's architectural work in Persia was never so supported; and if anyone with interest and funds is inclined to support archaeology, should they be derided or commended?"²⁴ Relevant here is the one notice that Robert Byron (1905–41) in his travel classic, *The Road to Oxiana*, has of meeting Pope. He relates how Pope "came in an aeroplane with Mrs. Moore, a matriarch in a shawl, more than seventy years old and worth as many millions . . . Christopher²⁵ was appalled at the toadying that went on, but he has no sympathy with people whose work depends on private benefactors."²⁶ Pope's letters to Ada Moore in the book *Surveyors of Persian Art* in fact indicate the connection was cultivated as much for Pope's role in supplying Moore with Persian objets d'art, including, it seems, a large cache of the Buyid silks whose authenticity has been subsequently challenged.²⁷

Returning to Pope's rejoinder, however, this was not the end of it, for Smith wrote a rejoinder to Pope's comments, which was published in the same issue.²⁸ This was considerably more measured, and at least opened with the following: "The debt which the scholarly world owes to Mr. Pope for his enterprise in photographing and publicizing the architectural monuments of Persia is one which will forever stand to his credit. Among his debtors in this regard I am happy to number myself. For it was a handful of his first photographs of the

22 Smith 1956, 247.

23 Pope 1957.

24 Pope 1957, 216.

25 The reference is to Christopher Sykes, Byron's traveling companion.

26 Byron 1937, 218–9.

27 *Surveyors*, 238–42.

28 Smith 1957.

Masjid-i Jum'a in Isfahan, which he kindly showed me in 1930, which incited my interest in that noble structure, diverting my studies forthwith from the architecture of medieval Europe to that of Islam, a change which I have never had reason to regret."

The other most severe critic of the Survey's architectural contribution was André Godard, who in 1928 had been appointed director of the country's archaeological service. Even he, at that time, was not permitted to enter mosques, a change which Pope managed to bring about through the direct intervention of Reza Shah, who earlier in 1925 had been in the audience for a lecture delivered by Pope on the greatness of Iran's artistic heritage.

An opening pre-publication salvo was fired by Godard in 1936 in his preface to the first volume of *Athār-é Īrān*, the *Annales* of the Archaeological Service of Iran:

Since the *Annales* above all should serve to make new documents better known, we will publish here the greatest possible number of drawings, photographs, copies of inscriptions and historical notices accompanied only by the explanatory text and necessary conclusions. In other words you won't find here dithyrambic descriptions or in particular hazardous comparisons that, under the pretext of tracing influences, confuse all questions and are the bane of archaeology.²⁹

These are clear references to Pope's effusive style and probably also to his obsession about the Persian origins of Gothic architecture. It is also worth noting that the volume included two articles by Myron Bement Smith, whom nobody would ever accuse, of course, of using dithyrambic descriptions.

Pope was able to retaliate in his review of the *Athār-é Īrān* in the *Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Architecture*, published the next year. He quotes a passage by Godard from an earlier article describing the Tari-Khana mosque at Damghan: "By the harmony of its proportions and masses it is still one of the most magnificent buildings of Islam. Nothing, however, except perhaps memory, can restore the impression of grandeur and of sovereign beauty with which it enchants the traveler when, towards evening, that hour so kindly to ruins, its walls of rosy earth light up, and beautiful shadows rise, softened by the vast rounded surfaces of its piers." "If this be dithyrambic," says Pope, "let us have dithyrambs."³⁰

29 Godard 1936.

30 Pope 1937, 229.

But the major broadside was delivered by Godard in his review of the *Survey* in *Ars Islamica*. Godard begins with a calculated insult, quoting Beaumarchais from *The Marriage of Figaro*: “Il fallait un calculateur, on appela un danseur,” “An accountant was needed, instead they got a dancer.”

One aspect of the review is initially puzzling, namely that fully half of it was devoted to the chapters by Schroeder on early and Seljuk architecture. While it is true that Schroeder's earlier mention in a review of Godard's “inaccurate observation” and “eccentricity hardly credible” in his interpretations of the Isfahan Friday mosque are likely to have engendered animosity,³¹ all becomes clear from a passing remark in a notice published by Stuart Cary Welch (1928–2008) on Schroeder, where it transpired that Godard had promised to write the chapters on early and Seljuk architecture in the *Survey* but at a late stage in 1935 had changed his mind, at which point Schroeder had undertaken the task.³² After much nit-picking of Schroeder's work Godard writes. “Shall I continue? On no account, I'd just be wasting ink, and I'm already had my fill of this task.” He restricted the remainder of his review to comments on the plates. One interesting one is on the Gawhar Shad mosque at Mashhad, where Godard appropriately commented on the hideous “extra parapet” that Byron had praised in his chapter as being a way for the architect, Qavam al-Din, to smooth the transition from *ivan* to court. Godard correctly interpreted it as a later Safavid reinforcement and, some time after his review, when he was still director of Antiquities, it was quietly removed from the building—presumably on Godard's orders.³³

Pope's rejoinder to Godard's review pointed out that Godard had had the chance to review most of the galley proofs, and that he returned them to Pope with many commendations and only a few criticisms.³⁴ Pope also mentioned another possible cause of jealousy, that many of the published monuments were discovered by Pope and Schroeder, and were studied by them in some cases even years before Godard entered them.³⁵ Schroeder published his own refutation of Godard's review, but that needn't concern us here.

It is interesting to compare the two later works by Pope and Godard synthesizing their fields, Pope's *Persian Architecture* of 1965 and Godard's *l'Art de l'Iran* of 1962, also published in an English translation in 1965.³⁶

31 Schroeder 1937.

32 Welch 1969–70, 16.

33 O'Kane 1987, 128, n. 14.

34 Pope 1942, 171.

35 Ibid., 172.

36 Pope 1965A; Godard 1965.

Godard ostensibly covers the art as well as the architecture of Iran, although it is only in the pre-Islamic chapters that he makes an attempt to cover these in any detail. There is also a great contrast in their division of the material: the pre-Islamic in Godard's book takes up four chapters out of five; in Pope's two chapters out of nine.

One feature which unites them both is the almost total failure to cover Qajar architecture. Talinn Grigor has attributed this to the usual suspect, Orientalism: "it has suffered because the Orientalist canonical historiography, both inside and outside Pahlavi Iran, invented the myth that after the fall of the Safavids, Persian architecture underwent an acute decline, making it unworthy of scholarly attention. Forecasting, and to a great degree provoking, the elimination of Qajar architecture from the canon Pope continuously contended that "the Qajars know nothing and cared nothing for Persia's great tradition in the arts. . . ." and that Qajar art was "grotesque and stupid" at best.³⁷ Even if one doesn't agree with Pope's assessment of the rock cut carving of Fath 'Ali Shah at Rayy as "grotesque and stupid,"³⁸ it is still possible to maintain that it represents a considerable artistic decline from its Sasanian models. Earlier in the same essay from which this quote was taken, Pope had contended that "The influence of Europe in the nineteenth century with its gaudy and vulgar taste had been, so far as it reached to Persia, nothing short of a calamity . . . and Persia has never touched a lower grade of taste than the so-called 'Age of Horror' that produced so many monstrosities in the middle of the nineteenth century."³⁹ This is certainly over the top, but again, it is hardly just Orientalist myth that views Qajar tilework, with its addition of a lurid pink to the palette, as anything other than a decline from the standards of its Safavid and Timurid predecessors.

It is true that, out of the 1,445 pages on Islamic architecture and its decoration in the *Survey*, one page (before a discussion of baths) is reserved for the nineteenth century. But Pope, born in the Qajar period himself, and 44 years old when it ended, was notoriously adverse to modern architecture, and as for its Persian manifestations it is more likely to be a case of him being too close to the material to evaluate it properly. In any case, it is difficult not to enjoy a frisson of irony knowing that Pope and Ackerman, on their repatriation to Iran in the sixties, were ensconced in one of the most delightful Qajar pavilions in Shiraz, the Narenjestan, with its homage to Persepolitan sculptures on its dado.

37 Pope, "The Past and Future of Persian Art," in *Surveyors*, 93–110.

38 *Surveyors*, 110.

39 *Ibid.*, 106.

Several of the scholars noted above mentioned Pope's skill as a photographer, and it is worth emphasizing the extent to which, self-taught, he recognized that photography was an extremely useful tool, not only for its documentary evidence of buildings that would soon disappear or be altered beyond recognition by restoration, but also as a way of introducing to a wider audience masterpieces of architecture which they were previously ignorant of and thereby engendering enthusiasm and, just as importantly, funds for the Institute. The photographs were frequently taken under particularly difficult conditions, with speeds of 2–5 ISO,⁴⁰ and so it is not surprising that Pope mentions exposures of up to 20 minutes to one hour in length as being common. Developing the plates must have been another headache, as few if any commercial facilities were to be found locally. Pope quickly mastered the art of the rising front in bellows cameras, diminishing the problems of converging verticals caused by tilting the camera upwards. During the first exhibition of his photos in England he complemented the camera maker on this flexibility, who replied that "our cameras are not at all capable of such contortions." "Well," said Pope, "thank heavens I didn't know that when I took the photographs."⁴¹

In 1932–3, for instance, major photography exhibits were held in at the Musée Guimet in Paris, at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin, the Royal Institute of British Architects in London and the Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow.⁴² Pope's archive of some 8,000 photographs now belongs to the University of Shiraz, the former Pahlavi University, but I have been unable to obtain information as to their accessibility.⁴³ I recently had the privilege to edit a volume of articles that used as their springboard Creswell's original photographs of monuments that had been subsequently destroyed or altered;⁴⁴ it is to be hoped that some enterprising scholar, Iranian or otherwise, might pursue the idea of a similar volume based on Pope's photographs, which are certain to be of like value.

To summarize, there is no question that Pope was enormously instrumental in raising the profile of Persian art, and in particular Persian Islamic architecture, on the world stage. The editing and writing of a major part of the *Survey*, as well as supplying many of its photographs, was a staggering achievement in its day, and its publication in a relatively short period of time was largely due to the charisma and energy of Pope. But perhaps we should leave the last

40 The norm when I was doing my own fieldwork in Iran in the 1970s was 64, as in Kodachrome 64, as opposed to the 200 which is now standard with digital cameras.

41 *Surveyors*, 175.

42 *Surveyors*, 273–82.

43 Emails to the university have not been answered.

44 O'Kane 2009.

remarks on Pope's scholarship in the *Survey* to Creswell, who, as we have mentioned before, characterized it as "presenting an overwhelming mass of new material." My late colleague George Scanlon (1925–2014) used to tell the story of how he once, in Creswell's hearing, let drop some disparaging remarks about the *Survey*. Creswell retorted, "Listen boy, when you're drowning in the middle of the ocean, you don't wait for the Queen Mary to come along."⁴⁵

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PART 3

*Curators, Collectors, and Art Dealers:
Pope and Pre-Islamic Persian Art*





FIGURE 7.1 *Herzfeld encamped in the Palace of Darius I at Persepolis, above its Southern stairway in the 1920s*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FREER GALLERY OF ART AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY ARCHIVES, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC).

‘The Greatest Enterprise’: Arthur Upham Pope, Persepolis and Achaemenid Antiquities*

Lindsay Allen

Of course, it must be perfectly plain that in no single discourse could one possibly describe or appraise Persian art. An art that has extended over 2500 years.¹

Arthur Upham Pope’s relationship with the concept of ‘Persian Art’ was that of a story-teller shaping his greatest epic. Pope’s presentation required a dramatic origin story, for which he drew from the most well-known

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1 Pope 1928, 3. Pope’s ideas develop a nationalist conception of Persian culture sketched by Robert Murdoch Smith in the late nineteenth century (Smith 1889, 1–2).

historical eras of pre-Islamic Iran. In 1928, Pope (1881–1969) advised the museum director Fiske Kimball (1888–1955) that two pre-Islamic dynastic eras, “Achemænian 530–321 BC [*sic*]” and Sasanian, were among the “four periods of Persian art of major importance.”² His selection echoed similar statements made in Tehran in 1925 by the archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948), and correlated with Pope’s timescale of a Persian art that persisted “over 2500 years.”³ This lifespan gradually expanded: by late 1930, again following Herzfeld, Pope heralded in print the exciting emergence of a third previously-unknown era of early Persian art, the era of production of animal-style bronzes from the mountainous region of Luristan, and which flooded the art market from that year.⁴

Each of Pope’s ‘important’ eras had a primary geographical reference point, often at the main site of current archaeological activity in which he had an interest. Rayy, or Rhages, near Tehran, became his primary early Islamic space, where first his friend and associate Rabenou dug for ceramics and stucco and later, the archaeologist Erich Schmidt (1897–1964) undertook investigations on behalf of his Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology.⁵ His Sasanian reference points followed Schmidt to Damghan, but also referred to Taq-i Bostan, which he photographed, and to Herzfeld’s work at Kuh-i Khwaja.⁶ The Achaemenid monumental stone remains of Persepolis, near Shiraz, embodied the preceding imperial era during which Persian power had reached its greatest territorial extent, from the Mediterranean to Central Asia.⁷ For earlier and

2 *Surveyors*, 155; letter from Pope to Fiske Kimball, December 26, 1928.

3 Herzfeld’s more extensive account asserted that “this nation has reached the zenith of its culture at least on four occasions: first, the Achaemenian period when Iran was the center of the known world . . . ; second, the Sassanian period, which, in fact, is considered the period of Iran’s progress . . .,” Grigor 2004, 27.

4 Pope 1930B; Muscarella (1989) outlined the profile of their availability as follows: “Until the late 1920s such objects continued to appear sporadically, but mass plundering of Luristan tombs seems to have begun in that decade. Although various years have been suggested, 1927 or 1928 seems most likely, for by 1929 and 1930 museums in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Brussels and Hamburg had acquired multiple specimens . . .” Pope later dated the bronzes’ emergence to March 1930 (Pope 1932B, 380).

5 “In the beautiful city of Rhages, as well as other parts of Persia . . .,” Pope 1928, 6 and 18; this was a profile created largely with reference to unprovenanced pottery marketed as having originated in Rayy.

6 Pope corresponded with Schmidt on the progress of his dig at Damghan on behalf of the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Gürsan-Salzmann 2007); Kuh-i Khwaja (Pope 1928, 6).

7 Pope 1928, 3–4; Pope 1930A, 19. The geography shifted according to time and setting; Pope 1933 stretched to more than one site ‘at Susa, Ecbatana (Hamadan), Persepolis, and other places’ (Pope 1933, 7–8). In an early hand-written list drawn up 1925 to advise the Boston Museum

interlinking centuries such as the Parthian or Arsacid era, Pope cited potential sources of instructive ceramic chronologies.⁸ The wild landscape of Luristan was the imaginary locus of a noble and creative race of pre-Achaemenid “horse-riding aristocrats” in the account of Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977), his partner and close collaborator.⁹ The spatial transition via these sites, from “wide fertile valleys under the shadow of huge mountains” to urbane, elite interiors near the capital supported an account of the nation’s cultural progress. Pope’s most-traveled narrative route, from Luristan to Rayy, via Persepolis, brought the archaeological traveler from an outer zone of pure, prehistoric creativity in the lawless grasslands to first, monumental, then, subtle and ornamented expressions of political hierarchy. Such material facets of pre-Islamic national character also dovetailed with aspects of self-definition under the early years of the Pahlavi dynasty.¹⁰

Pope’s chosen pre-Islamic highlights emerge as repeated motifs in his published texts, his voluminous private letters, and archival evidence of his commercial involvement in the sale of artefacts. Across the full spectrum of his textual output, his pre-Islamic citations fall into three generic categories. First, in his speeches and publication projects, Pope invoked ancient Persia as a magnificent prelude to, indeed a hegemonic harbinger of, the leading role he assigned to Persian Islamic art in the Muslim world. Second, his private correspondence of the 1930s focused on the potential role of his own, newly-founded American Institute for Persian Archaeology in archaeological projects across Iran, both those that they directed, and those beyond their immediate official remit. Third, and more scantily, individual letter exchanges and archival documents testify to Pope’s pre- and post-war involvement in the marketing and sale of individual pre-Islamic antiquities.

of Fine Arts on suitable locations, Pope listed Damghan, Seistan and the Demavand valley under ‘Prehistoric,’ Hamadan under ‘Medean,’ Hamadan, ‘Kasvin (?)’ and Shiraz under Achaemenian and no sites under ‘Parthian’ (letter from Pope to Charles Hawes, November 1, 1925, Boston Museum of Fine Arts).

- 8 Pope’s coverage of the Parthian era, governed as it was by ‘Turkic stock,’ was patchy: his 1928 survey dealt with it in four lines (Pope 1928, 4). In 1933, he went so far as to cite ‘the early civilizations of Susa, Damghan and Asterabad’ in a discussion of what was truly ‘Persian.’
- 9 The quotation is from Ackerman’s 1940 write-up *The Luristan Bronzes*, quoted in *Surveyors*, 151. Pope and Ackerman co-authored an article in the *Illustrated London News* of May 6, 1939, on ‘Prehistoric bronzes,’ and Pope’s manuscript biography echoed Ackerman’s description of the recovery of the bronzes (*Surveyors*, 153) so that their collaborative conception is difficult to disentangle, see Grigor 2004, 38–39.
- 10 Grigor 2008, 17–45; Overton 2012, 62–64.

This paper concentrates on Pope's particular interest and involvement in the development of Persepolis as a site of archaeological investigation and as a key point in the marketing of Achaemenid antiquity as a whole. Individual object biographies begin to emerge from the evidence for Pope's commercial and intellectual networks. In many cases, these mercantile object biographies can offer the only starting point for scholarly discussion of unprovenanced objects held in widely dispersed collections. The available archival data allows for an outline discussion of two groups of artefacts here: 'Persepolitan' bas-relief fragments (that is, Achaemenid style stone reliefs purporting to be or apparently from Persepolis) and precious metal vessels. This archival data is embedded in Pope's personal correspondence. Persepolis was therefore a cornerstone not only of a conceptual historical framework, but also a social and economic one. Pope's aspirations regarding the site were expressed *via* his exchanges with the museum directors Horace Jayne (1898–1975) and Fiske Kimball, the archaeologists Ernst Herzfeld and Erich Schmidt, and less visibly, with Ayoub Rabenou and with the Iranian political elite. Also part of the broader enabling network were the private donors who funded archaeological expeditions and the American diplomatic staff who became embroiled in negotiations over archaeological concessions.

In 1929, it was still unclear which of several competing American institutions would win the permission to excavate Persepolis; a French monopoly on excavation ended in 1928, and a new antiquities law was debated, drafted and redrafted for the next two years. During the period of limbo, Pope championed the interests of the two Philadelphia museums 'as a kind of scholarly broker' and, on occasion, floated possible collaboration between museums including Boston, alongside the Philadelphian duo.¹¹ By 1931, the Persepolis dig had been undertaken by the Oriental Institute of Chicago, under the supervision of Ernst Herzfeld, a situation that excluded Pope from the site. However, Pope continued to facilitate the dissemination of Persepolis beyond Iran, either through a long struggle to obtain new pictures of it for his *Survey* or by recommending the acquisition of its fragments to private and public collectors. The combination of Pope's interest in Persepolis with his distance from the mechanics and context of the official excavation had consequences for the collection profile of Persepolis, and for Achaemenid antiquities more generally, in America.

11 Ernst Herzfeld quoted by Mousavi (Mousavi 2005, 462–3).

Persepolis and the Persianness of Ancient Persia

In Pope's nationally shaped narrative of Persian art, the guiding idea was of aesthetic continuity across the centuries, even before Persia was 'Persia.' Therefore according to Pope, pre-Islamic and Islamic material culture alike testified to a continuously high level of 'artistic capacity' across the centuries. This intrinsic aesthetic property, Pope argued in 1930, bridged even the imagined displacement of original inhabitants by Aryan invaders, ca. 1400 BC, according to contemporary hypotheses.¹² Pope's somewhat vague concept of continuity anchored to an authentic homeland responded to nationalist concepts which had emerged from a nineteenth century discourse about Iran's unique identity.¹³ Pope found the conceptual tension between the racial origins of these concepts and the already distinctive artistic genius he claimed for 'pre-Aryan' artefacts difficult to negotiate. By 1945, the Aryan migrations had disappeared from his outline of Persian history in *Masterpieces of Persian Art*.¹⁴ Meanwhile, his pre-Islamic aeons of Persian civilization stretched to achieve priority to the extent that it "preceded that of Egypt by at least five centuries, that of India by more than a thousand years, of China by two thousand."¹⁵

The era of the first Persian empire, heralded by Cyrus the Great's conquests in the mid-sixth century BCE, introduced into this venerable artistic world a "lordly scale" commensurate with the political power of successive kings, until the destructive invasion of Alexander the Great.¹⁶ Pope's purpose in Persianizing the whole history of art within the geographical parameters of the modern nation stage of Iran meant that he tended to omit or denigrate the usually-cited influences (Greek input was "decidedly provincial").¹⁷ The Achaemenids were no longer the end of a series of great Oriental empires of the ancient East, a paradigm that began to crystallize after the Assyrian

12 Pope 1930A, 4: 'It must not be thought that because artistic production was in some degree continuous in Persia for those thousands of years it was therefore the work of a single race ...'

13 On the post-Gobineau nationalist discourse, see Kashani-Sabet 2002; its impact on Pope's representation of Persian culture discussed in Rizvi 2007, 50, 54.

14 As Ağa-Oğlu commented in an indignant review, "Persian art has been considered as an isolated entity." On the absence of the Aryan migrations, Ağa-Oğlu concluded: "This serious disregard of one of the most important events in the history of the Near East leaves the unmistakable impression that the author considers the population of the Iranian plateau before ca. 1500 BC to have been Iranian" (Ağa-Oğlu 1947, 54).

15 Pope 1945.

16 Pope 1930A, 4.

17 Pope 1930A, 5.

discoveries of the mid-nineteenth century, but the beginning of the architectural articulation of the Persian character on a monumental scale.¹⁸

... adorned with rich polychrome decoration in tiles, metal and textiles, to say nothing of sculptured reliefs of high quality, these palaces, by virtue of their size, their lucid planning and their beautiful workmanship, must always be counted among the masterpieces of architecture.¹⁹

The historical falls of each dynasty faded from view in Pope's elision of them into a visual stream of consistent artistic expression. He expressed this consistency using the words 'sense' and a 'feeling'.²⁰

It has often been said that the great Achaemenian art was the creation solely of the court and that it died without issue. But this is far from true. There was affirmed at this period a sense of scale and grandeur that was never lost, a feeling for polychrome decoration which was developed by the Sasanians and reached its fulfillment in mediaeval Persia as well as an ideal of rationality and clarity which, if it was never comparable with that of Greece, is certainly superior to that of Egyptian, Chinese, or Indian architecture.²¹

The essential and unassailably persistent Persianness of pre-Islamic Persian art was for Pope allied, in the Achaemenid period, to the birth of the country's kingship. The monarchic character of the capitals at Susa and Persepolis took the foreground of Pope's presentation of the era in his speech delivered to the new Shah in April 1925:

... palaces so magnificent that over two thousand years later, with all the growth of civilization that has come between, we are still astounded by the skill and magnificence there displayed. It was kingly art, and never have kings been more nobly housed ... despite the fact that the Persian

18 For the low status of ancient Persian art, see the position of Achaemenid and Sasanian reliefs in Stephanoff, published in Jenkyns 2003, 177, fig. 164.

19 Pope 1930A, 4.

20 Such language may echo the kind of rhetoric about Persian culture that had become current in the previous decade. Grigor quotes the Museum of Ethnography's founder, Ali Hannibal who aspired to "the revival of the taste/spirit (*zawq*) of Iranian craft (*san'at*)" (Grigor 2004, 35).

21 Pope 1930A, 19.

kings shrewdly used workmen from other countries and wisely gathered information and examples from every available source, *none the less truly Persian art*, and we see there some of the essential characteristics of the Persian aesthetic genius coming to early and beautiful expression. The columns of Persepolis, which have something in common with the columns of the great Egyptian temples, are far more graceful, far more rational. . . . That beautiful logical fitness which distinguished Greek architecture, in which the column is beautifully proportioned to the apparent load that is to carry, was in a large measure realized at Persepolis, and its slender, sharply fluted columns look strong and energetic and graceful. And the capitals with pairs of kneeling oxen at the top seem particularly fitted to carry a heavy weight. Moreover, the Persians understood construction better than either the Assyrians or the Egyptians . . .²² (my italics)

The Achaemenid architects, in avoiding the “clumsiness and depressing massiveness” of Egyptian architecture achieved environments “overwhelming in their splendor.” The closing of Pope’s speech directed all this glorious description into a powerful message of political and cultural rejuvenation: “The artists of today should now be put in touch with the work of their own masters.”²³ Pope presented shining new objectives of higher artistic achievements and the possible foundation of a national museum as aspirations which would distinguish the new era from the dismal and derivative Qajar age.²⁴

Despite this apparent tailoring to the cause of Pahlavi legitimacy, Pope tended to address his exhortations to a dual audience, as if attempting to articulate his own personal engagement as an American with Iran in collective terms. On his return to America from his trip in 1926, Pope advertised that there were “great opportunities awaiting Americans in Persia today. A closer friendship between the two nations will bring benefit to both.”²⁵ These opportunities were not just archaeological, but technological and mineral. Not only was the Qajar concession of all archaeological rights to the French considered to be up for renegotiation, but so was the British grip on Iranian oil production through the Anglo-Iranian oil company.²⁶ Ultimately, the British possession of oil remained secure, whereas French supervision of the country’s antiquity was successfully disputed and modified. Pope was prepared, in his

²² *Surveyors*, 105.

²³ *Surveyors*, 107.

²⁴ *Surveyors*, 110.

²⁵ *Surveyors*, 112.

²⁶ *Surveyors*, 113.

assertions of the late 1920s, to claim a revolutionary new age for the nation's entire past and future, aims which were consonant with the ambitions of Reza Khan.²⁷

In doing so, Pope began to yoke Persian identity to contemporary American aspirations. This mental strategy was adopted more widely, as American familiarity with Persian culture increased. On the acquisition of a fragment of sculpture of Persepolis by the Yale Art Gallery, the museum bulletin described the art manifested at the site as "secular, imperial, heroic and eclectic." Continuing in terms with which Pope would only have partially agreed, the curator concluded, "It was a borrowed and adopted art made up of diverse and conflicting elements, and, as such, is strangely reminiscent of that of today."²⁸ Pope's characterization of Persia as a nation embarking on an instant modernization resonated in America. The restyling of the Achaemenids as a new monarchy in a fresh nation, while also being a successor superpower to earlier, Near Eastern empires, held conceptual parallels, albeit on different timescales, for both America and Iran. The likemindedness of the two nations was an idea that Pope elaborated upon in the mid-1930s, in a letter to 'Ali Asghar Hekmat (1893–1980), Minister of Education, in response to a diplomatic upset over an American newspaper article:

There is no country in the world that has had a more generous and enthusiastic admiration of Iran. From the very beginning of our contacts Americans have believed in Iran; have believed that it could rebuild itself and create a new phase of its civilization... No country knows better than we do what these things mean or how much energy and courage are required. America has been too recently through a pioneer epoch not to understand these things thoroughly.

America really wishes nothing from Iran except friendship and the chance to serve and help.²⁹

27 The wide-ranging dissemination of and response to Pope's speech is summarized in Grigor 2004, 32–33.

28 'T.S.' 1933, 8.

29 Letter from Pope to Hekmat, June 18, 1936, Pope Correspondence, NYPL/AUP.

Flames over Persepolis

Friction between the two men had already begun to develop, with Herzfeld emitting most of the sparks. It was inevitable, as each wanted to be the main figure in Persian archaeology.³⁰

American involvement in Iran in the first years of the Pahlavi monarchy had strong cultural leanings, but with significant economic facets. Funding questions and anxieties suffused both the planning and execution of excavation work in Iran after 1930, most notably at the highest profile site of all, Persepolis. Under the 'old regime' of the Qajars, areas of the Persepolis terrace was first scavenged and then informally dug in the early nineteenth century by British visitors.³¹ The Governor-General of Shiraz, Farhad Mirza, later cleared part of the site in the 1870s.³² The French monopoly on archaeological activity had largely been exercised at the layered, multi-period site of Susa. At Persepolis, by contrast, the denuded stone skeleton of doorways and stairways visible above a draping fill showed an apparently simple pattern of separate structures, which ostensibly belonged to a single period of occupation, under the Achaemenid kings. The site had been associated afresh with monarchical nationalism during the Qajar era. Its special status was fostered by continuing international interest, and by the heritage renaissance desired by the new Pahlavi elite.³³ The result was that the American institutions interested in an excavation permit for the site regarded the dig as primarily a process of conservation and restoration. This was an approach that was advocated at a crucial part in the archaeological discussion phase by Herzfeld, in a paper published in his own *Archaeologische Mitteilungen*.³⁴ The prevailing attitude towards winning the site, therefore, was complicated.

Frederick Wulsin (1891–1961), commenting in 1937 on the ambivalence of the Philadelphia museums over assuming responsibility for the site, noted that despite this hesitation, “pictures of Persepolis had been used by [them]

30 Wulsin 1937, 2.

31 See Allen 2013A for a survey of the early nineteenth-century removals. Fragments also continued to be removed to Europe in the late nineteenth century, but in smaller numbers (Allen 2013B).

32 Sarkhosh Curtis 2005, 255.

33 Grigor quotes the minister Mohammad 'Ali Foroughi's emotional words on the “deplorable state of Persepolis” during a conference held with Herzfeld on May 9, 1927 (Grigor 2004, 35). Reza Shah was inspired by national pride by his second visit to the ruins in 1928 (Goode 2007, 152–3).

34 Herzfeld 1929/30, see Goode 2007, 143–4.

in a campaign to raise money for digging in Persia.”³⁵ Once a new Antiquities Law was passed in late 1930, the popular prominence and the imagined problematic nature of Persepolis contributed to a confused and increasingly bad-tempered scuffle between the key players in the race to excavate in Persia.³⁶ Pope’s attempt to exert decisive influence in this race is essential context for Herzfeld’s later exclusion of him from the site. Beyond this, both of their names also appear in connection with the appearance of unexcavated pieces of Persepolitan sculpture and other Achaemenid antiquities in Europe and North America from ca. 1930 onward.

Discussions about a new Antiquities Law dragged on between 1929 and 1930, between the circling foreign archaeologists, the newly appointed Director of Antiquities, André Godard (1881–1965), and a series of government ministers.³⁷ Throughout this period, both Pope and Herzfeld tried to find the most advantageous series of alliances that would enable them to pursue a successful and rewarding excavation campaign in this new ‘Persian field.’ Herzfeld harbored possessive feelings about the Persepolis terrace site (fig. 7.1), which he had surveyed already in 1923 and 1928.³⁸ He later made his home there, within a modified, reconstructed palace building, between 1931 and his forced eviction from the site in 1934. Pope, on the other hand, was interested in splendid finds and the conceptual impact of possessing and displaying the site on the world stage. Passing references suggest that both Pope and Herzfeld thought that they would discover more portable treasures in the hummocky landscape of the neighboring medieval site of Istakhr; this, they suspected, was a multi-period urban site, continuously inhabited since antiquity. “Pope,” reported Wulsin, “thinks in terms of fine pieces, [and] wanted us to get Istakhr and guaranteed paying quantities of actual objects in the first week of excavation.”³⁹ At a developed stage of planning, in November 1929, Pope wrote to Jayne:

The excavation of Perserpolis [*sic*] is not a desireable [*sic*] undertaking for an American institution. Nothing whatever could be sent out of the country. There is no reason to expect important finds . . .

35 Wulsin 1937, 7.

36 On the Antiquities Law and associated politicking, see the detailed account of Mousavi 2005, and in the context of wider heritage developments in the Middle East, Goode 2007, 141ff.

37 Wulsin 1937; Mousavi 2005.

38 Dusinger 2005, 140–1; Mousavi 2012A, 160.

39 Wulsin 1937, 7.

Perserpolis cannot be properly conserved or correctly excavated without the excavation of the adjoining site of Istakhr. The latter site is certainly vastly rich in everything down to late Muhammadan times.⁴⁰

At first, all concerned envisaged the possibility that Pope and Herzfeld would work together, presenting Persepolis as the flagship site of American and Iranian archaeological cooperation, while reaping rewards in the form of finds under the surface of Istakhr. Pope stated clearly in a letter from Berlin in August 1929 that “Herzfeld had made a definite and positive agreement with me that he would direct any American expedition that I could arrange for, for an indefinite period.”⁴¹ Pope already named the prime target of this joint initiative: “If . . . Persepolis were to be done, and I believe I can arrange for that, Istakr should be done at the same time . . .” At this point, he was hedging his bets about the relative merits of Persepolis and Istakhr:

Persepolis is in some respects the most important unexcavated site in the entire field of archaeology . . . From what I have learned from Herzfeld, from some of his unpublished investigations, [finds?] can be expected just beneath the surface both there and at Istakr.

He concluded, “these excavations ought to throw important and revealing light on certain problems in Chinese, Indian and Greek art aside from giving the material for the reconstruction of an extraordinary moment in the history of culture.” Nevertheless, in the same letter, Pope advised Jayne that “archeological expeditions cannot by themselves furnish all the necessary material for a really systematic collection of Persian or Islamic art.” For Pope, it was reasonable, in the search for a top quality collection, to operate outside the parameters of official archaeological excavation:

There are native diggers and will be for years, like Rabenou, who if given a little capital will produce substantial results.⁴²

40 Letter from Pope to Jayne, November 3, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–1940, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

41 Letter from Pope to Jayne, August 17, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives: This letter is the source of the following four quotations.

42 Letter from Pope to Jayne, August 17, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31/Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

On October 3, 1929, Horace Jayne wrote of his ambitions requiring the cooperation of Pope and Herzfeld to David Williamson, secretary of the US Legation in Tehran. Williamson was himself interested in the portable antiquities to be had in the country, and as the son-in-law of the president of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, dealt predominantly with the Philadelphian side, who used the State department apparatus for their communications:

Since taking over the University Museum it has been foremost in my mind to start archaeological work with the two Philadelphia Museums participating jointly, and I had scarcely a fortnight before sounded Pope out on his prospects of Persepolis and the possibilities of getting the cooperation of Herzfeld. He deemed both feasible and we authorized him to proceed with preliminary negotiations upon his return to Persia this autumn.

You will therefore understand how imperative we felt it to steer Herzfeld away from [James Henry] Breasted and if possible line him up for us. If you are able to effect this it will be splendid . . .⁴³

Persepolis and its perceived ancillary, Istakhr, were thus a package with Herzfeld's valuable supervision, all of which were vulnerable to the competitive politicking of James Henry Breasted (1865–1935) of the Rockefeller-funded Oriental Institute in Chicago. In the same letter, Jayne addressed legation curiosity (and incipient concern) about the role of Arthur Upham Pope. Jayne unsentimentally endorsed Pope:

Now in regard to Pope. I can honestly say that I have the fullest confidence in him. I have been pretty closely associated with him off and on for the past four years and though obviously erratic and an indomitable optimist, he has never once failed to carry out his part of the projects. You need not certainly worry about his honesty; he is careless, forgetful and always has a huge number of irons in the fire, yet he is the last man to do anything at all shady. As to his finances I must say I have often been puzzled by them: I suppose he has some sort of independent means, for I am fairly sure he gets no regular salary from any Museum. He writes voluminously, is a semi-dealer and quite properly takes reasonable commissions when they are for him and this adds materially to his income . . .

43 Letter from Jayne to Williamson, October 3, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

Jayne's uncertainty over Pope's finances was shared by a number of museum clients, many of whom were in the process of assigning him funds to bring them supplies of Persian artefacts. A comparable uncertainty about Pope's real political and institutional role in the field in Iran may have begun to erode Herzfeld's confidence in him. Herzfeld's appointments diary shows meetings with Pope throughout 1929, whenever he was in Iran, in February, March and several times in October.⁴⁴ Wulsin complained of Pope's lack of consistency about his position on different drafts of the antiquities law, which were currently under discussion: "... it was hard to judge his real position by talking to him, as he agreed temporarily with anyone and then forgot the conversation."⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Herzfeld appears to have been spooked by Pope's invitation of multiple interest groups to the table in setting up a Persepolis excavation. An urgent telegram arrived in Philadelphia from Williamson on October 11 alerting Jayne to Pope's 'meddling'; it was followed by a letter of October 13th reporting that:

Herzfeld has come to me in a fury saying Pope was s----ing him, etcetera. It appears Pope has gone about saying that Herzfeld was empowered by the Persians to form a Persepolis Association composed of various national groups. The Italian Government has taken a hand in this and wishes to be formally represented. Now Pope is a nice fellow but a dangerous talker. The negotiation with the Persians is somewhat delicate and the less said about the whole subject of excavating the better. Herzfeld won't do anything for you if Pope is mixed up in it; if, therefore, you want the Persian field, keep our friend Pope away.⁴⁶

Pope showed no sign of any diplomatic setback, writing to Jayne in November that:

Persepolis is of course the greatest enterprise... The adjoining site of Istakhr must be done conjointly... Persian nationalism centers with enthusiasm and resoltion [*sic*] around Persepolis. It is to Persia what the Valley of the Kings is to Egypt or the Manchu tombs to North China.

44 Freer Sackler Herzfeld archive N-177.

45 Wulsin 1937, 7.

46 Letter from Williamson to Jayne, October 11 and October 13, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929-40, Persian Exhibition 1929-31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives. The twelfth word in the quotation is unclear in the handwritten original.

Permission is not only possible by the vote of the Council of Ministers. No boasting but for your information, I can get it if anyone can.⁴⁷

By December, Williamson was more uncertain about which of the two protagonists, Herzfeld or Pope, were ahead in the diplomatic race. He wondered whether Herzfeld was spreading discrediting rumors and noted that Pope made “great strides in public and Government opinion . . . All this riles Herzfeld who wants the Persian field to himself.”⁴⁸ By spring 1930, Wulsin sent less encouraging news to Jayne about Persepolis, saying “Godard tells me that Teymour [Abdolhussein Teymourtash; 1883–1933; minister to Reza Shah; r. 1925–41] has sworn to him that they will never let foreigners touch Persepolis and Istakhr, as they are national monuments.”⁴⁹

Pope responded to the competition for both Persepolis and Herzfeld from the Oriental Institute by sending a letter to the Iranian French ambassador, Mr. ‘Ala’ (Hussein ‘Ala’; 1882–1964), drawing his attention to James Henry Breasted’s various shortcomings. Pope alleged that he was “imperialistic” and controlling, that he once smuggled a gold figurine out of Jerusalem and that he unjustifiably regarded the Nile valley as the “seat of the beginning of historical civilization” over the competing claims of Mesopotamia and Iran.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in December 1930, Persepolis was granted to Herzfeld and the Oriental Institute. The speed of the development caused Breasted to scramble for extra funds from Mrs. Ada Small Moore (1858–1955) to support this extension to the Institute’s scope.⁵¹ The repercussions of this prelude of com-

47 Letter from Pope to Jayne, November 3, 1929, Director’s Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives; Pope sent a similar note from Cairo on February 4, 1930, downplaying the expense of Persepolis.

48 Letter from Williamson to Jayne, December 14, 1929, Director’s Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

49 Letter from Wulsin to Jayne, May 7, 1930, Director’s Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40, Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

50 Goode 2007, 146.

51 Goode reports that Breasted told the State Department that he had requested the option to dig at Persepolis, but not the immediate concession (Goode 2007, 146–7). Iran was not within the parameters of the grant made by John D. Rockefeller (1839–1937) to support excavation projects of the Oriental Institute, so special funding provision needed to be made. Appeals for extra money specifically for Persepolis appear in the Oriental Institute’s correspondence with the Rockefeller Foundation after Mrs. Moore’s support began to fal-

petition and intrigue continued to unravel through the first months of the Persepolis excavation in 1931. Having initially sought only the government's priority, the restoration of Persepolis, in 1930, Herzfeld requested the extension of his remit to Istakhr during the following year. He found, however, that Pope's Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology had lodged an existing application for Istakhr. He commented in a letter to Breasted that "there is something utterly wrong about that whole affair. And I attribute that—perhaps erroneously—to the activity of Mr. Pope."⁵²

Herzfeld's tension and the continuing ambitions of Pope's freshly minted institute made for a tinderbox atmosphere, which ignited on the occasion of what Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970) came to title 'the Persepolis Affair' which was the subject of several post mortems in both camps.⁵³ Bement Smith retained hand-written notes of a meeting held in November 1931, which discussed the causes of what appears to have been a heated confrontation between Herzfeld and Pope at the northern end of the Persepolis terrace.⁵⁴ The meeting's discussion ranged widely over the points of contention, which included the AIPAA's continuing claim on Istakhr and Pope's allegations about Herzfeld's private buying and smuggling of Achaemenid artefacts "in the diplomatic bag."⁵⁵ But the 'Affair' itself was a simple event: Pope had arrived at Persepolis and begun to take photographs of the ruins for his survey, when he was ordered by Herzfeld to stop.⁵⁶ One suggestion was that he imagined Pope to possess a telephoto lens with which he was trying to photograph the

ter in 1935. Meanwhile, Rockefeller referred to Persepolis as 'not the Foundation's baby' (RFA letter to Fosdick, August 20, 1935) and after offering limited support, suggested that Mrs. Moore should 'resume the support of this enterprise' the following year (RFA letter to Charles Breasted, April 15, 1936).

52 Letter from Herzfeld to Breasted, March 14, 1931, Director's Office Correspondence, 01; Jayne indicated that he continued to stake a claim to Istakhr in a letter to Murray of the American legation, January 13, 1931.

53 *Surveyors*, 216.

54 Myron Bement Smith Papers, Subseries 1.2, Meeting Minutes, November 25, 1931, FSG.

55 This last allegation foreshadows accusations made in 1935 in a denunciation of Herzfeld by his assistant between 1931 and 1933, Alexander Langsdorff, who claimed to have got the story from Roman Ghirshman, see the discussion in Gunter and Hauser 2005, 30–31, with nn. 84 and 87.

56 Herzfeld sent a version of events to Breasted, which Breasted in turn relayed to Mrs. Moore: 'Professor Herzfeld's report, which I have lying before me, states that Mr. Pope appeared unexpectedly at Persepolis, sent up somebody else's card bearing on the back a request to photograph; but as Herzfeld was sending down a reply, he observed Mr. Pope already busily photographing!' Letter from Breasted to Mrs. Moore, January 25, 1932, Director's Office Correspondence, 01.

excavations, situated a short distance away from the main terrace access. Pope packed up his equipment and left.

Much entertaining publicity material was written in the early '30s about Pope's exclusive access to sacred space in Iran's mosques, and his possible vulnerability to fanatical expulsion.⁵⁷ But the 'Persepolis Affair' was ironically the one occasion on which Pope was brusquely halted in his mission and expelled, but from a pre-Islamic rather than an Islamic space.⁵⁸ Herzfeld in turn was himself forbidden by the government to return to his former domain after 1934, not even to collect his own belongings. Multiple possible reasons have been floated for Herzfeld's own expulsion, but in at least one quarter, Pope claimed, or was assigned, credit.⁵⁹ Rexford Stead reported the account told him by Pope's assistant Farajollah Bazl in 1980:

Dr. Pope was a good friend of Mrs. Moore who financed some of Herzfeld's archaeological excavations in Persepolis... Dr. Pope, in this manner, managed to remove Herzfeld from Persepolis, which was indeed the greatest prize, and replace him with the late Dr. Erich Schmidt, a good friend of Dr. Pope's...⁶⁰

The Commodification of 'Achaemenid Stones': Supply, Replication and Variation

The smoldering afterglow of the controversy of 1931 over Pope's access to Herzfeld's Persepolis persisted for several months. Despite claiming the moral high ground in private, there is no sign that Pope tried to revisit the site while Herzfeld led the dig. This may be because during the course of 1931, a further dark cloud came to follow him, in the eyes of the Oriental Institute. This next scandal touched more directly on Pope's mercenary reputation. I revisit it here because it has not received detailed attention in previous discussions of Pope's dealing activities. Pope's career intersected with and indeed facilitated the

57 Much of it encouraged by Pope himself, see his 'narrow escapes' from his autobiographical *Nine Lives* text, *Surveyors*, 178–9.

58 Herzfeld was cagey with other visitors carrying cameras, see Robert Byron's account of his visit in 1933 (Byron 1937).

59 See the discussion at Gunter and Hauser 2005, 28–30; Mousavi 2005, 466–70 itemizes the progressive disintegration of Herzfeld's network of support, which cumulatively facilitated his expulsion from Persepolis.

60 *Surveyors*, 216.

trajectories of numerous objects en route to diverse collections. Their routes highlight the social mechanisms that underpinned Pope's ability to make a living. Each artifactual transaction marked a change in an antiquity's value, while simultaneously promoting Pope's status.⁶¹ He could both passionately promote publicly, and enticingly present for sale privately, pre-Islamic artefacts that were not his primary scholarly focus.

The first sign of trouble in the United States came with the appearance of photographs of Persian antiquities offered for sale by Stora, which were forwarded to Charles Breasted at the Oriental Institute by the Field Museum.⁶² Breasted reported seeing photographs that showed familiar, fragmentary bas-relief figures. These had apparently been taken from the stone parapets that lined processional stairways leading up to the palaces of Darius and Xerxes towards the south end of the Persepolis terrace. The appearance of these fragments was a surprising development. Bas-relief fragments from Persepolis had first been removed en-masse from the site by a series of British visitors in the early nineteenth century. Most of these had reached the British Museum by the 1880s.⁶³ The same museum purchased three more fragments in the 1890s, but relatively few pieces of Persepolis appear to have been on the open market at this stage.⁶⁴ In 1927, Berlin and Cambridge each acquired a fragment taken from different structures.⁶⁵ Including a small relief transferred to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1916, only three previously-unknown Persepolitan fragments entered public collections in the thirty years before 1929.⁶⁶

61 For object biography as a series of assertions of value through exchange, see the discussion by Alberti 2005.

62 Charles Breasted forwarded the photographs to Herzfeld in a letter of November 13, 1931. Letter from Charles Breasted to Herzfeld, November 13, 1931, Director's Office Correspondence, 01.

63 Mitchell 2000; Allen 2013A. A further small collection was donated to the Royal Scottish Museum by Sir Robert Murdoch Smith in 1887 (Allen 2013B, n. 31).

64 BM 1894,0331.19 and 1895,1022.6 are both small pieces, purchased from Rollin and Feuerdent, that could conceivably have originated in earlier nineteenth-century British collections (and were acquired in object groups containing a miscellany of Egyptian and Near Eastern pieces). BM 1894,0331.20, also from Rollin and Feuerdent, is more comparable in size and type to those pieces available after 1930 (but is the only such piece known to me with an earlier accession date).

65 The Fitzwilliam relief was purchased at auction after being offered by the art historian Archibald Russell Nicholls and Roaf 1977 and comes from the Central Building. The Berlin fragment is a 'tribute bearer' or servant (VA 8799) and was published in Sarre 1929 (acquisition date, Nagel 2010, 240).

66 Allen 2013B. A few small fragments now in Berlin were probably removed during the 1920s by Herzfeld (Nagel 2010, 240) and held by him in his personal collection.

By contrast, Stora, along with Brummer and Kelekian, all three dealers who worked from bases in both Paris and New York, together sold at least twenty-four reliefs to American and European collectors in the decade or so following 1930. From a baseline of one fragment, which had been in the University of Pennsylvania Museum since the 1890s, the Persepolis count in North America, excepting the Oriental Institute, exploded to approximately forty by the middle of the century.⁶⁷ Very few of these reliefs came from the excavation division of finds.⁶⁸ The Oriental Institute first became aware of the handful being offered for sale by Stora in 1931, only a few months after Herzfeld had begun his official excavation and 'restoration' of Persepolis. If the removal of reliefs were by chance associated with their own operations at the site, they would have faced a diplomatic disaster. Charles Breasted wrote on November 13 to Herzfeld:

Stora is a firm which has been offering for sale quantities of Luristan bronzes and other Persian antiquities. I might add that Pope has been in closest touch with them and undoubtedly furnishes them with much of this stuff, from the sale of which he derives his usual modest 'cut'!

My good friend Mr. Henry Field of the Field Museum referred these photos and this correspondence to me, and since their provenance seems to be Persepolis, I feel you ought to have these pictures in your files against the possibility of coming upon further bits of these same sculptures. I need hardly add that the Institute regards the Stora prices as preposterous.⁶⁹

Breasted Jr already thought it likely that Pope should be implicated in Stora's sudden access to a supply of Persepolitan sculpture. Herzfeld's reply on January 7, 1932, confirmed this, and explained how the supply came about:

67 Allen 2009; this is a provisional count based on testimony collated from museum archives, and is still subject to revision. Compare Nagel 2010 with Roaf 1987. Penn Museum's fragment is UMB 10301.

68 The exceptions are Nelson-Atkins 50-14, a bull-headed capital from the excavation later de-accessioned by the Oriental Institute and purchased by the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 1936.37, which was received as part of the division of finds from Persepolis in recognition of financial support provided in the latter stages of the dig. The Oriental Institute also later transferred a column base (A.24064) to the British Museum, by exchange (BM 136209/1974.1210.1).

69 Letter from Charles Breasted to Herzfeld, November 13, 1931, Director's Office Correspondence, OI.

... The sculptures have been stolen from Persepolis and belong to one of the sculptured staircases. According to some investigations, the stones have been taken away a year or a year and a half ago by a dealer called Rabb-i-no, great friend of Mr. AUP and have been exported by the latter, when he had got the permission to export 120 boxes free of duty and inspection through customs for the London exhibition. Not having himself 120 boxes, the number has been made full by adding boxes belonging to Rabb-i-no and another dealer.⁷⁰

Herzfeld's time-frame takes the removal of the reliefs to the late summer or autumn of 1930, a few weeks before the passage of the Antiquities Law in November.⁷¹ Pope and Rabenou were touring Iran both together and separately during this time, as Pope continued his photographic survey and collected objects for exhibition. Pope and Rabenou also appeared in reports from the American Legation of the export of large architectural pieces out of the country in preparation for the London exhibition. Charles C. Hart wrote "as reported in the press, twenty-eight packages of Persian art objects were sent from Tehran to London on September 13 [1930] by four Junker's aeroplanes to Abadan, where they were turned over to the Manager of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company for transshipment to London for the forthcoming Exposition of Persian Art. Mr. Jacks, the Resident Director of that Company, also sent a case of his own antiquities with this shipment for the Exposition."⁷²

The first exports of Persepolitan fragments to North America, then, coincided with the opening of the International Exhibition of Persian Art in London in early January 1931. Brummer imported his first relief from Paris, purchased there from "Sasoun," on February 9, 1931; further fragments from the

70 Letter from Herzfeld to Charles Breasted, January 7, 1932, Director's Office Correspondence, 01. Herzfeld told the same story to Jayne, see Goode 2007, 149 with 254 n. 25, specifying that the antiquities included Persepolis reliefs (letter from Herzfeld to Jayne, June 15, 1931, General Correspondence, Tepe Hissar, UPMMA).

71 In August 1930, Pope wrote to Jayne from somewhere outside Tehran anticipating that the law would be passed 'any week now' (excerpt from Arts of Asia Foundation papers, *Surveyors*, 221). Letters from Mirzayantz, Pope's agent and a deputy of the Majles, written from various parts of Iran in June and July 1930 testify that he and Rabinou were travelling together gathering objects for the exhibition, and liaising with T. L. Jacks on transport.

72 Majd 2003, 44, with 52 n. 37, citing Hart, dispatch 841.607 Persian Art/2, September 23, 1930, although here only Islamic 'antiquities' are specified; it is unclear whether Godard, who was responsible for inspecting the shipment of artefacts from Tehran, where exhibition material was centrally gathered, also inspected Jacks' shipment at Abadan, or at some earlier point, *Surveyors*, 186.

same source filtered through steadily in March, June, August and September.⁷³ In May 1931 Boston Museum of Fine Arts acquired its first relief, for which the credit line offers no other dealer name than that it was “purchased by the MFA through Arthur Upham Pope...” Boston, for whom Pope was acting as acquisitions advisor, was thus one of the earliest public collections to acquire a relief (fig. 7.2).⁷⁴ Meanwhile, Kelekian acquired his first attested relief from the dealers Sassoon frères on July 18, 1931.⁷⁵ Museum accession records and stock numbers indicate that Stora had at least five reliefs in stock by late 1931; he offered one to the Oriental Institute in November, which was sold to the Detroit Institute of Art by December 11.⁷⁶ At this point, therefore, we have two names associated with early possession of the reliefs, Rabenou and (primarily) Sassoon, and the third man at the ‘advisory’ level, Arthur Upham Pope. Stora, Brummer and Kelekian were, at this stage, the main transatlantic exporters and intermediaries.

73 Stock card P339, the Brummer Gallery Records, the Cloisters Library and Archives, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

74 BMFA 31.372, *Survey of Persian Art*, pl. 98. Surviving parts of the MFA correspondence surrounding the purchase show that Pope had initiated the acquisition directly from Paris in April (Boston MFA Directors Correspondence, Arthur Upham Pope, April 16 to May 13, 1931).

75 Kelekian Archive, C. Dikran Kelekian, Ancient Arts, Onassis Library for Hellenic and Roman Art, Greek and Roman Department, F7 Inventory, 1919–37 ‘Inventaire des Marchandises’, 64: ‘1931 18th July. P [=Paris Gallery] R. 4357 Bas-relief achiménide [*sic*] tête de Roi Sassoon frères’. The same inventory records the acquisition of two objects called ‘Bas-relief persan en pierre’ (precise identity unclear) and, in 1933, two objects labelled ‘bas-relief achiménide’, inventory numbers 4570 and 4571.

76 DIA 31.340, Stora inv. no. 8494. The Stora acquisitions are documented in stock sheets held by the Getty Research Institute. A stock sheet drawn up on December 2, 1946, records the acquisition and subsequent sale of a ‘Stone relief representing a Persian servant, From the stairway of Persepolis’ along with four others from ‘Sassoon’. The purchase of DIA 31.340 was agreed by December 11 for \$2,200, but Stora had originally asked \$4,200, the same price he put to James Henry Breasted on November 24th (correspondence of Valentiner, Detroit Art Institute, cross-referenced with Oriental Institute, Breasted correspondence, folder 33, Stora 1930–2, November 24, 1931, with reply from Charles Breasted December 1). Stora’s name can be connected through museum provenance statements, stock sheets and images or distinctive inventory numbers with at least eleven distinct Persepolitan fragments. He sold three in spring 1931 (now Louvre AO 14050, 14051 and Dumbarton Oaks 31.1), one in December 1931 (DIA 31.340) and offered a fifth to the Oriental Institute in February 1932 (Breasted correspondence, folder 33, Stora 1930–2, February 27, 1932, letter from Furst to J. H. Breasted, with reply from Jean Roberts, March 15, 1932, 01; the photograph was returned, so the identity of the relief is uncertain).



FIGURE 7.2 *Boston's first Persepolis relief, MFA 31.372, purchased 'via' Arthur Upham Pope*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).

Despite all this activity, Persepolis reliefs were not particularly high profile objects within the publicity surrounding the London exhibition itself. Achaemenid sculptural fragments did not feature in the early lists of hypothetical loans for the exhibition, among the New York Public Library papers. Six fragmentary bas reliefs were scattered around the walls of Gallery 1 in Burlington House, interspersed with casts and glazed brick from Susa. After the opening, the Persepolis reliefs were rarely mentioned in press reviews, which gushed instead about color and the “Oriental splendour” emanated by the later artefacts.⁷⁷ Where the Achaemenid architectural pieces were specifically described, commentators sometimes failed to distinguish between the original stones and the more complete cast versions loaned by Nottingham Museum.⁷⁸ In effect, the Burlington House exhibition displayed Persepolitan fragments as an ancient core within the full splendor of Persian art. The fragments thus became desirable as foundation stones to collections of Persian as well as ancient art. The new wave of available Persepolis reliefs travelled under the radar along the private networks of collecting and patronage, until they emerged again in public collections. Collection proveniences were given for each artifact on display. Four of the Persepolitan fragments were museum and private loans; the remaining two had no collection histories preceding 1931, and were loaned by Stora and Kelekian.⁷⁹

A few documents pertaining to organization of the International Exhibition of Persian Art survive in the New York Public Library Pope papers. They attest to a close business relationship between Pope and two particular dealers. Loan forms for all dealer-owned stock were completed for each object. Pope's files include a sheaf of sheets relating to Rabenou's loans, and forms for four items loaned by the Sassoon brothers. With the exception of a Safavid brocade textile piece, these appear to have been modern products, including two sets of doors which Pope had originally viewed, as the Sassoons wrote, “chez notre frère à Ispahan.”⁸⁰ Of all the loan forms, Pope took responsibility himself for filling out those relating to only two dealers, Rabenou and Sassoon. In a memo

77 *Surveyors*, 198.

78 *Surveyors*, 196.

79 London 1931, 5: items 2 (Fitzwilliam, accessioned 1927), 4 & 5 (Berlin, accessioned 1927 & in the nineteenth century); 8, case 10, item R (Richard S. Strachey, 1803, see Allen 2013A); 18, items 18 “sculptured marble panel, three bearded men” 46 × 78 cm (Stora), and 19, 20 “bas relief, bearded man” 61 × 55 cm (Kelekian). Stora, Kelekian, Rabenou and others appear as lenders of multiple other pre-Islamic, previously unknown artefacts in this section.

80 Letter from Sassoon freres to Pope, October 4, 1930, Correspondence 1921–51, NYPL/AUP.

of December 8, 1930, Pope wrote to his co-organizer Keeling, "Sassoon has received no loan sheets or other documents. He will not understand the loan sheets, so they had better be sent to me to fill up here and I will send them on to him to sign."⁸¹ On December 7, 1930, just before finalizing the Sassoons' loan documents, Pope also wrote to the Victoria and Albert Museum offering them the brocade textile piece for purchase. He said, "I had intended it for an American collection but if you really want it at the Victoria and Albert you may have it. Only let me know as soon as you can and in any case it cannot be withdrawn from the Exhibition."⁸² Pope's tone of proprietorial benefaction in funneling objects towards the museum is recognizable from his pre-1931 approach towards Persepolis. Pope here appears to be acting as an intermediate agent for the Sassoons.

Their letterhead attests that Sassoon brothers maintained a Paris address at 20 Rue Cadet, as well as a shop in the Isfahan bazaar, but both Pope's language, and the size of their loan to the London exhibition seem to indicate that they were comparatively smalltime dealers. Fleeting references from correspondence suggest that the Sassoons may have had an association with Rabenou, if only just before and during the sale of the initial flood of Persepolis reliefs in 1931. In October 1930, the Sassoons referred to an notification they had received via "Mons Rabenou" in August that Pope would like to take their doors on loan. They added, "We would be grateful if you could sell [other items] for our account." On December 12, 1934, in search of illustrations of Achaemenid sculpture for the *Survey of Persian Art* Pope wrote briefly to Rabenou referring to the past sale of two sculptures from Persepolis. He asked, "1. Where can I get hold of a photograph of the Achaemenid stone that Sassooni sold?" and "2. We need a photograph of the stone you sold to Carl Holmes. Do you have one?"⁸³ Pope's inclusion of both sales in a single letter to Rabenou suggests either the marketing of the two may have been closely associated, or that Rabenou had some kind of oversight or knowledge of the Sassoon stock.⁸⁴

81 Letter from Pope to Keeling, December 8, 1930, Correspondence 1921–51, NYPL/AUP.

82 V&A Registry records: MA/1/5515 Sassoon(ian); I am indebted to Mariam Rosser-Owen for tracking down this independent documentation of Pope and the Sassoons.

83 Letter from Pope to Rabenou, December 12, 1934, Correspondence 1921–51, NYPL/AUP.

84 Pope's specificity in referring to a single piece sold by the Sassooni cannot reflect a belief that they sold only one in total; he may be referring to an object sold direct by the brothers, rather than one marketed through one of the Brummer-Kelekian-Stora trio. Of those pieces eventually illustrated in the *Survey*, only Boston MFA 31.372 was sold via Pope direct from Paris from an unnamed dealer (pl. 98, although since the *Survey* does not include the Holmes fragment, we cannot be sure that Pope's picture requests reflect those ultimately illustrated).

If Carl Holmes bought only one Persepolis relief, then the example he purchased from Rabenou must be the one now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.⁸⁵ Carl Holmes was a sponsor of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology who later donated money specifically for an expedition to Luristan, to be undertaken by Erich Schmidt, Herzfeld's successor at Persepolis. The association of private collecting with public archaeological philanthropy was not unusual. In fact, the relationship seems to have been structural and causal among those philanthropists being cultivated as dig sponsors by Pope on behalf of the AIPAA. Both the Holmes family and Mrs. William Boyce Thompson received small selections of objects from the excavations they underwrote.⁸⁶ By contrast, the tension between the enabling support offered by Mrs. Ada Small Moore to the Persepolis expedition and her private buying was a source of worry for James Henry Breasted, who had already limited private buying of antiquities from the market among his staff.⁸⁷ Breasted outlined the situation in a letter to Mrs. Moore:

Regarding the sculptures which our expedition has already salvaged, Herzfeld writes: 'The re-erection of the sculptures has revealed to us a series of marvellously preserved pieces . . . I have put together a list of the pieces which have been stolen since 1818 and which are now mostly in the British Museum, but in part have also recently appeared on the antiquities market in Paris. [Professor Friedrich] Sarre [Berlin] has just at the moment sent me six photographs of such pieces which he had received from Paris . . .

Some months ago I sent to Herzfeld some photographs of Persian reliefs which I also received from Paris which are on sale there in New York by Stora. They have been appearing on the antiquities market since the beginning of the Persian exposition in London and the evidence is quite clear how these magnificent pieces of Persepolis sculpture reached the European dealers.⁸⁸

85 LACMA 63.36.17; see now Mousavi 2012A, 181 n. 72, and Mousavi 2012B.

86 This is chiefly attested through Erich Schmidt's correspondence with the Oriental Institute, with Mrs Thompson herself, and with Jayne, since foremost in his mind was the need to cultivate his sponsors' patronage through such privileged gift-exchange.

87 Harold H. Nelson (enclosing a protest against the regulation from Hoelscher) referred on March 31, 1931, to a 'regulation regarding antiquities purchased or found by members of the expedition' that the OI had first refusal in acquiring them (thus limiting or discouraging private collecting) as being in place already for five years. I am grateful to John Larson for bringing this letter exchange to my attention.

88 Letter from Breasted to Mrs. Moore, April 11 1932, Director's Office Correspondence, OI.

Breasted does not mention Pope's name, but his implication is clear. Certainly, Mrs. Moore knew to whom he was referring, since she replied a week later, "I have not discussed the matter of your letter with Mr. Pope . . . Of course, I know that he has brought to this country and sold many interesting Oriental objects, for I have bought them from him myself . . . However, I realise that there are certain ethics of which I am not familiar, and much prefer not to be associated with them in any controversy." Mrs. Moore may have continued to follow Arthur Upham Pope's advice on purchases, since in 1933 she purchased and donated a neatly trimmed stairway figure from one of the palaces of Darius or Xerxes to the Yale Art Gallery.⁸⁹ The Oriental Institute were not the only collection conscious that new Persepolis fragments on the market had a problematic history; Sidney Smith of the British Museum reported in 1937 that they had "from time to time been offered slabs from the staircase found by Professor Herzfeld . . . such offers have always been refused and the dealers informed that these antiquities are stolen."⁹⁰

Should we regard Breasted's heavy hints about Pope's culpability as clues or mere rivalrous accusations? After all, in August 1931, Pope reported to the American Minister in Iran that Herzfeld wrongly suspected him of having informed "Persian Government officials that there were in [Herzfeld's] possession certain important antique objects of which he preferred the Government not to know."⁹¹ By mid-1931, the two seem to have been caught up in a tit-for-tat exchange of paranoiac suspicions, which were based, in part, on truth. After all, Herzfeld had taken "important antique objects" for his own collection, as recently as 1929, which he later sold in the 1940s.⁹² Both Pope and Herzfeld

89 Yale 1933.10; the Cleveland curator Dorothy Shepherd commented on Pope's guidance of the Holmes and Moore collections, *Surveyors*, 170. Stora's marketing photo of the Yale relief had reached the Oriental Institute by 1932 either as an alternative potential buyer or for appraisal (Photo no. 18536 Neg. 10809, OI, marked "Persepolis. Bas relief. An Achaemenid stone from the palace of Persepolis"; also marked in pencil "8493 Hauteur, o.m 32, Largeur o, m 25 and in green ink: 'FOR SALE'").

90 Smith, October 1937, BM Dept of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, CORRESP. 1937 O-Z.

91 Majd 2003, 41. Herzfeld's former assistant and member of the SS, Alexander Langsdorff, later raised the smuggling rumors in a letter of denunciation against him, whom he called 'a typical international Jew' on June 20, 1935, Gunter and Hauser 2005, 29–31.

92 See below on the bull-headed capital from Istakhr, now in the Metropolitan Museum, 47.100.83, and a fragment from the Palace of Darius, now MMA 45.11.17; Dusenberre 2005, 145–6. Herzfeld also appears to have removed six small fragments from Persepolis during his survey of 1928, which were deposited in the Islamic museum and are now in the Vorderasiatisches Museum, as discovered and itemized by Nagel (Nagel 2010, 239–40); this tallies with a request found by Jens Kröger, dated July 24, 1935, for "an official receipt for a

were operating in an increasingly ambiguous and contested interwar climate of emergent ideals of preservation and cultural property. There is a contrast as well as a similarity between their commercial practices. Where complete object biographies are attested, Herzfeld held onto pieces for longer than Pope, as part of a collection formed perhaps with the combined desire for study and for appropriation. Only in the 1940s, without a permanent academic post, Herzfeld sold off large parts of his own archives, as well as antiquities, with the implicit understanding that his own knowledge and connoisseurship added value to them.⁹³ Pope, meanwhile, dealt in objects, not insights, and at a much higher rate of turnover.

In summary: Herzfeld alleged in June 1931 and again in January 1932 that Pope had in late 1930 topped up his official exhibition shipments with boxes of antiquities, including Persepolis reliefs, belonging to “Rabenou and another dealer.” Our evidence of Pope’s business in the run-up to the Exhibition suggests that “another dealer” might have been the Sassoon brothers from Isfahan. Meanwhile, T. L. Jacks was an additional facilitator and (alleged his political rival Hart) a co-conspirator in the export of artefacts including antiquities. Jacks and Pope are also linked again in a further case study examined below. Pope was later subjected to a ‘trial’ after the Exhibition in London ended, having been accused by Maurice Dimand (1892–1986), the curator at the Metropolitan Museum, of using the Exhibition as a shop front and of selling objects, including fakes, at inflated prices.⁹⁴ The allegations against Pope do not arise from only one source, and bespeak a complicated personalized patronage network in which he maintained multiple interests in the export of antiquities.

Pope’s letters show that he was already involved in marketing what he referred to as “Achaemenian stones” to museums from as early as spring 1929, even before the looting event alleged by Herzfeld. On April 24 in that year, after spending part of March and April in Tehran, Pope wrote to Horace Jayne that:

number of objects [Herzfeld] had first lent and subsequently donated to the Museum für Islamische Kunst” (Gunter and Hauser 2005, 29).

93 This summary does not necessarily hold if we also admit the possibility that Herzfeld was illicitly exporting and immediately selling large numbers of antiquities in the early ‘30s specifically, in a way not yet detected in individual object biographies. This possibility is hinted at by the conclusion that ‘Herzfeld was using areas of the Fortification as a staging zone for a major illicit export operation,’ proposed by Gunter and Root (Gunter and Root 1998, 8 with n. 27) on the basis of a crate of tableware found on site in the 1970s, addressed to Herzfeld.

94 *Surveyors*, 203–7.

...I have induced a friend of mine who came to Persia with me from Egypt to give you a really fine Achaemenian stone... such as you see at Persepolis exactly like Sarre [acquired in 1927 for Berlin]... except that this figure is walking on a level. You will get the formal offer and the stone as fast as possible. It is in nearly perfect condition. A whole piece with two figures but rather seriously damaged is being held here for 8000.⁹⁵

However, Jayne, unusually among Persianizing museum directors of the 1930s, never acquired a Persepolis relief for the University of Pennsylvania Museum.⁹⁶ On returning from Europe that same autumn, Pope meanwhile wrote to Fiske Kimball "I am hoping to catch the Achaemenian capital on this trip."⁹⁷ Pope was probably referring to a stray bull-headed capital long visible at Istakhr, to whose mosque Achaemenid column fragments had been removed in the early Islamic period.⁹⁸ David Williamson had also been keen on acquiring the capital, but Herzfeld appears to have removed it himself that summer, perhaps aware by now that it had attracted a lot of attention.⁹⁹

The fresh outflow of fragments did not go unnoticed in Iran; the Ministry of Public Instruction and the Foreign Ministry became aware in 1930 of the announcement in November 1929 by the *Berliner Borsen Zeitung* of the new Persepolis relief purchased in 1927 by the Berlin museum.¹⁰⁰ By 1931, the

95 Letter from Pope to Jayne, April 24, 1929, Director's Office, Box 14/10 JAYNE 1929–40 Persian Exhibition 1929–31, Pope, Arthur/International Exhibition of Persian Art, Penn Museum Archives.

96 Two Brummer fragments approximately correlate to Pope's vague description, but may not be the fragments referred to here. The William Rockhill Nelson Foundation later purchased a stairway figure, "walking on a level" from Brummer in April 1933 (Nelson-Atkins 33.101), Brummer's card (P8001) indicates the piece arrived in his stock in New York on September 3, 1931. Meanwhile, a "piece with two figures but rather seriously damaged" could fit with the restored piece (stock card P9067) later sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1934 (MMA 34.158). Both recorded in the Brummer Gallery Records, the Cloisters Library and Archives, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

97 Letter from Pope to Fiske Kimball, Correspondence 1921–51, NYPL/AUP.

98 Amory described and photographed the bull's head at Istakhr almost immediately before it was taken (Amory 1928, 54 and 66).

99 Now MMA 47.100.83. Letter from Williamson to Jayne, October 11, 1929, Director's Office, JAYNE correspondence, Penn Museum Archives. Williamson's aside on the capital is prefaced "STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" and he continued, "the Persians are not aware of these facts, and I would advise extreme caution in speaking of them. The plan Herzfeld outlines is roughly this: To restore Persepolis and to excavate this other field [Istakhr]... Of course, he needs watching, as he is avid of finds. I should be wary of Pope too."

100 Acquired from Bacri in 1927, see Nagel 2010, 239–40.

Ministry also became aware of the Boston Museum's new acquisition and asked the American legation to investigate, pointing out that the export of the bas-reliefs was now forbidden.¹⁰¹ The Ministry suspected that specifically Iranian Jewish dealers were smuggling the antiquities out of the country. By 1933, an Iranian Jewish resident of Paris had apparently informed on the smuggling operation; "later the minister of court announced that two young Jews from Isfahan had used the proceeds from the sale of stolen carvings from Persepolis to flee to Palestine."¹⁰²

It is tempting to see the Sassoon brothers, of the Rue Cadet and, as their letterhead proclaimed, the "Seraye Mokhless, Ispahan" in the "two young Jews" from Isfahan who fled to Palestine. The "Iranian Jewish resident" who cooperated with the Foreign Ministry in their investigation could have been any one of several dealers in Paris. From 1933 to 1935, Brummer was still buying reliefs from the Sassoons, but when he sourced further reliefs in 1936 and 1937, he bought them instead from Y. Azizollahoff & Co., also in Paris.¹⁰³ Brummer's continued purchases through 1935 would seem to give a different picture than that of a pair of fly-by-night dealers who allegedly left for Palestine in 1933. However, the Sassoons do indeed fade from the picture as active suppliers after 1935. The broader contexts for the available evidence invite caution. One side of this narrative is constructed from the perspective of an increasingly anti-semitic governmental paranoia about Jewish business activities in the early 1930s, and the other draws partly on the allegations of Pope's rivals: Herzfeld and the Oriental Institute. Nevertheless, Herzfeld's belief in Pope's involvement in the recent export of several Persepolis bas-reliefs would explain the fierceness of his response to Pope's trespassing on the Persepolis terrace in 1931 far more than the possession of a telephoto lens.

By 1932, Pope indicated to his museum contacts that the supply of Achaemenid 'stones' was finite, as their export had been ended. On January 1, he wrote to Edward Holmes at the Boston Museum of Fine Art that "No more Achaemenid sculpture can leave Persia; the government has severely forbidden its export. The museum's acquisitions in these fields has been timely and advantageous."¹⁰⁴ On March 21 of the same year, Pope gave a list of available objects "recommended for purchase" to the William Rockhill Nelson

101 Goode 2007, 148.

102 Goode 2007, 162.

103 These were Brummer P9067, now MMA 1934, and P12123, sold to Winthrop in 1936 (the Brummer Gallery Records, the Cloisters Library and Archives, the Metropolitan Museum of Art).

104 *Surveyors*, 162, *Arts of Asia Foundation* document.

Foundation.¹⁰⁵ Tenth and last on the list was “*Achaemenian Sculpture*. There are a few examples available of Achaemenian sculpture from the Palaces of Cyrus and Darius . . . available for . . . \$2500 to \$8000.”¹⁰⁶ The price list matches the amounts realized by Brummer, from whom the Rockhill Nelson Trust acquired their sculpture in the following year. The market for fresh Persepolis reliefs bought from Brummer, Kelekian and Stora continued to prosper throughout the 1930s, partly because of the perception that the supply of reliefs would at any minute dry up. It is clear even from Herzfeld’s accusations that no one individual knew how many pieces had been taken from the site in 1929–30; the best contemporary estimate, based on individual dealer holdings, was six. Pope never gave precise numbers, although it is clear that there were far more than six. For collectors and museums, the individualized attendants from the collective stairway processions represented a limited selection of minimally varied, newly canonical Achaemenid sculpture. Each competing city institution could, with reference to the similar reliefs acquired by their peers, affirm that they possessed an essential sample from this key imperial aesthetic world.

Pope, with his references to an undifferentiated selection of “Achaemenid stones,” distinguished from each other only by condition and figural pose, contributed to the corpus’s disconnected distribution and anonymity of identity. Pope’s references to specific examples of buildings and iconography of Persepolis are in fact rare. His prose in the late 1920s and early 30s concentrates on the overall aesthetic effect of Achaemenid structural conventions, and their scale. In 1957 he articulated for the first time theories about the formal purpose of the site in *Persepolis as a Ritual City*. Starting from the assumption that it was “a symbol of some profound and central idea,” he proposed that the site was

105 *Surveyors*, 163–4, *Arts of Asia Foundation* document. The Trust’s decision to buy was encouraged by Langdon Warner, who a year later acting as an advisor for Oriental acquisitions, urged them to purchase a Persepolitan fragment from Brummer’s stock as “it is the finest of the lot on the market. The Louvre have just got two, and Boston one, from the same series. Breasted has just unearthed some others on the spot but they will either be replaced on the ruin or else brought to Chicago. None can ever get on the market”, letter to Jones, February 3, 1933 (I am indebted to Holly Wright of the Nelson Atkins Museum Archives for finding this correspondence). Warner does not mention Pope in his correspondence, but refers to the Boston acquisition that had been made through Pope.

106 This 1932 list of ‘a few examples available’ contrasts subtly with a type-written ‘Outline of the material needed for a complete and systematic collection of Persian and Medieval Near Eastern art’ provided by Pope for Boston 1929–30, in which he lists ‘Stone relief sculptures’ third on a list of desirable ‘Achamaenian’ objects, to be obtained by ‘Expedition. Few purchasable’ (letter from Holmes to Arthur Upham Pope, Director’s correspondence, Boston Museum of Fine Arts).

“primarily religious . . . a *Civitas Dei* . . . imbued with the peculiar virtue of royal authority,” and “the locale of divine investiture” with a particular emphasis on fertility.¹⁰⁷ Pope emphasized non-human iconography in support of his ideas and in only one of two brief references to human figures, described “a stout garrison of the ‘Immortals’ . . . represented on the great frieze with a monotonous iteration in the bas-reliefs . . .”¹⁰⁸ Pope here evokes a sort of mass-produced line of sculpture, which, as his personal letters suggest, was animated and invested with value by disassembly and dispersal. By contrast, Herzfeld’s selection of numerous stone fragments from the excavation for the Oriental Institute, made after he became aware of the diaspora of figures from the stairway balustrades, represented a very different array of textures and forms, including recognizable architectural features and sculptures in the round.

Nevertheless the ongoing Oriental Institute excavation, and its media coverage, underpinned market demand for sculpture, however distasteful Breasted and Herzfeld found this. In 1933, Pope himself sought a dig report from the Institute for his own *Bulletin*. Unusually, he voiced criticism of Herzfeld’s idiosyncratic reconstruction of one of the palace buildings at the heart of the site, which he had identified as the ‘harem’, as a domestic residence for himself. On receiving a report of the dig, he wrote to Bement Smith, “I writhed a bit, as you did, over [Charles] Breasted’s article. It was of course somewhat unfortunate . . . Breasted might have given us more photographs of the sculpture, and we didn’t need that rather shabby piece of business of the re-building of the harem . . .” Despite labeling it a “rather shabby piece of business”, Pope could not deny the powerful novelty and publicity value of reconstructing the ruin and concluded “it is not bad propaganda for the way we try to do business.”¹⁰⁹

Pope’s commodification of Achaemenid ‘stones’ in his advisory correspondence is comparable to his treatment of other impressionistically homogenous groups of artefacts. His creation of a demand for Luristan bronzes represents a useful parallel. Here, Pope had no competing excavation around which to frame

107 Pope 1957, 124–5, 129.

108 Pope 1957, 124. In draft, the terminology was less specific and cited the “numerous figures of the Imperial Guard and their monotonous iteration in the bas-reliefs . . .” (Box 5, Miscellaneous Writings, NYPL/AUP). The second reference to human figures is to a “multitude of envoys” (Pope 1957, 129). Notably both descriptions refer to the Apadana and Pope omits any mention at all of the smaller structures from which the stairway figures distributed from 1931 were taken.

109 Letter from Pope to Smith, Worcester Cottage, Walton Street, Oxford, July 25, 1933, Correspondence 1921–51, NYPL/AUP. By “our way of business” he probably implies an ongoing constructive American contribution to Iran, as much as the commodification of the site.

collecting demand, nor was the export of the bronzes as politically sensitive as the disarticulation of Persepolis. Herzfeld again provided the pioneering notification, followed swiftly by Pope's own narrative of the material ("Mute, yet elegant...").¹¹⁰ The creation of a collecting interest in this group of artefacts led directly to the funding of two expeditions to Luristan by the second half of the 1930s. To a large extent, Pope and Ackerman were freer to talk about the bronzes as a market phenomenon, although Pope only gradually came to address the issue of duplicate 'falsifications' among original antiquities. Apart from general statements about the possible social context and aesthetic tone of the pieces, the dominant descriptive strand running through their texts is the theme of numerousness, combined with paradoxical scarcity. In her account of the discovery of the bronzes, Ackerman described the appearance in 1929 of a "mass" of bronzes on the market.¹¹¹ One of the major dealers in the artefacts, Nasli Heeramanek "would collect one massive collection after another... streaming out of the earth in abundance."¹¹² But the rewards of the market led to overexploitation, as though the antiquity of Luristan were a geological resource, like an oil well. Within a couple of years, "cooperative groups" of Lurs, who "traversed the valleys in long lines... sounding the ground foot by foot with sharpened iron rods" ensured that "Luristan was exhausted."¹¹³

Pope's hierarchies of collecting, which he asserted in his advisory texts, included a variety of matrices of rarity, quality and connoisseurial selection. Persepolitan sculpture represented a comparatively high-ticket class, which were to be acquired for what they represented, rather than what they were. Pope's post-academic, entrepreneurial beginnings in interior decoration continued to underpin his intermediary role in collecting.¹¹⁴ Pope was often preoccupied with creating aesthetic environments, and altering the identity of surrounding space, in his early exhibitions. Some of his early exports were disarticulated architectural pieces, which transported a suggestion of ancient or Islamic space to their new locations. When Pope discussed his three great ages of Persian art with Fiske Kimball in December 1928, he discussed the

110 Herzfeld 1929; Pope 1930B.

111 Ackerman in *Surveyors*, 151–4.

112 *Surveyors*, 153.

113 Ackerman 1940 quoted in *Surveyors*, 151; the same anecdote was repeated, in different language, as hearsay by Minorsky in a 1945 review of Stein's *Old Routes of Western Iran* (therefore post-dating Ackerman's story in print). His story forms context for his report that "Even Sir A. Stein's eagle eye failed to discover one unspoiled grave between Alishtar and Harsin" (Minorsky 1945).

114 *Surveyors*, 123–40.

availability for acquisition of Safavid and Sassanian rooms but concluded “of course, no such thing as an Achaemenian room exists unless you except the so-called Tomb of Cyrus.”¹¹⁵ Within a year or two, seemingly, Pope had found a solution to this absence, with the transformation of the stairways of Persepolis into wall-mounted gallery-ware.

Pope's Secret Histories: Transactions under the Radar

By contrast with Pope's overt discussion of the market for Luristan bronzes, non-architectural Achaemenid artefacts are less visible in his known dealing activities. This may partly be the result of the pattern of available archives and in the choices of publication. The segment of Gluck and Siver's documentary biography concentrating on dealing reveals most about Pope's interest and involvement in the revelation of Luristan bronzes in the early 1930s.¹¹⁶ Meanwhile, the New York Public Library Pope papers include his correspondence with Ayoub Rabenou, but only from late 1933 onward.¹¹⁷ Pope's correspondence of ca. 1929 to 1932 and of the post-war period is largely accessible in scattered locations, according to the location of the addressee.

The degree to which Pope's role in the transit of other Achaemenid objects hovers under the official documentary radar is suggested by the case study of four silver *phialai* inscribed with the name of Artaxerxes, which were first noticed in 1932. The vessels are now divided between the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Freer Gallery in Washington and the private Reza Abbasi collection in Tehran. In 1998, Ann Gunter and Margaret Root published a detailed examination of the Freer example in which they presented a new synthesis of all available provenience information for the four vessels.¹¹⁸ The Freer *phiale* was purchased in 1974 and the British Museum example in 1994.¹¹⁹ The Metropolitan Museum example, purchased in 1947, is the only one of the four to retain a longer ownership history

115 *Surveyors*, 155; letter from Pope to Fiske Kimball, December 26, 1928.

116 *Surveyors*, 154–67. The problematic way in which Luristan bronzes had been collected was widely discussed by this point.

117 Pre-1933 correspondence files were accessible to the compilers of the documentary biography, where they were attributed to the archives of the Arts of Asia Foundation. The Arts of Asia Foundation is incorporated, as of 2012, in Pensacola, Florida and its president is Carl J Penton.

118 Gunter and Root 1998; the discussion of Herzfeld's possible export of the dishes resumed again in Gunter and Hauser 2005, 29–30.

119 BM ME 1994,0127.1 (Gunter and Root 1998; Curtis, Cowell, and Walker 1995).

reaching back close to the group's first emergence, "apparently soon after 1937, one of the vessels entered the Joseph Brummer collection and was displayed at the 1940 exhibition of Persian art in New York organized by the Iranian Institute of America."¹²⁰ The other three became part of the Kevorkian collection at an unknown date, and were finally sent to auction in 1970.

The four vessels are associated with Ernst Herzfeld early in the 1930s. He appears to first have had access to them in Hamadan in 1932, during the period that he led the Persepolis excavation; he later sketched at least one of the vessels in 1934 in Persepolis, prior to his publication of them in 1935 and 1937.¹²¹ The assigned provenience of 'Hamadan' has been recognized as a manifestation of the commercial flow of unprovenanced objects in the 1930s.¹²² The group could therefore have been excavated anywhere. Gunter and Root hypothesized that the *phialai* were part of a "'Herzfeld Treasure' . . . which left Iran clandestinely during 1934 and on the basis of which he was dismissed from directorship of the Persepolis Expedition . . ."¹²³ However, the evidence relating to the Metropolitan vessel in particular complicates even this tentative picture. Joseph Brummer's stock books and index cards in the Cloisters record his transactions with Herzfeld: in 1944, he sold to the Metropolitan Museum the fragmentary, Persepolitan bull-headed capital which Herzfeld had originally removed from Istakhr in 1929.¹²⁴ Brummer's stock card for the fragment records that he 'bought' it from Herzfeld in May 1938, and paid him \$2,250 in December 1944; the stock was presumably left with Brummer on consignment. However, Brummer's stock card for the Metropolitan Artaxerxes *phiale* records that it was purchased not from Herzfeld, but from Arthur Upham Pope in January 1940 for a 'list' price of \$3000. The *phiale* was finally sold to the museum on December 31, 1946, for \$2,500.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Gunter and Root 1998, 16.

¹²¹ And see the apparent discussion of this point by Ernst Kühnel and Herzfeld in 1935, quoted by Gunter and Hauser 2005, 29. Herzfeld said that he had seen a collection of silver bowls in the possession of his colleague Joseph Upton (Gunter and Hauser 2005, 30).

¹²² Gunter and Root 1998, 4–6; Muscarella 1977 and 1980.

¹²³ Gunter and Root 1998, 15; this hypothesis qualified with new evidence in Gunter and Hauser 2005, 29–30.

¹²⁴ MMA 47.100.83; see letter from Williamson to Jayne, September 9, 1929, JAYNE correspondence, Penn Museum Archives.

¹²⁵ Stock card no. N4513, the Brummer Gallery Records, the Cloisters Library and Archives, the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This information has since 2010 been included in the provenance data provided with the object online (<http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/324026>, accessed January 10, 2014).

Arthur Upham Pope's ownership of the Metropolitan *phiale* complicates the hypothesis that Herzfeld had possession of all four Artaxerxes *phialai* at the time that they were exported from Iran. It is clear that Pope owned at least one of them by the late 1930s. Earlier references among Pope's correspondence suggest that Brummer could routinely transport Pope's objects to New York with his own stock, from Paris.¹²⁶ By contrast, Pope's references to the rival dealer Kevorkian tended to be negative; Pope and Kevorkian appear sometimes to have been in competition over the same objects and the same clients. It is possible, therefore, that the set of Artaxerxes bowls were divided between rival buyers at an earlier point of sale, possibly within Iran. Given the disagreements into which Pope and Herzfeld had fallen by 1934, it seems unlikely that Herzfeld himself would have chosen to sell any Achaemenid metalware in his possession to Pope (let alone uniquely inscribed objects in which he took a philological interest). Nevertheless, Herzfeld's drawing of a single *phiale* at or near Persepolis in 1934 suggests that he may have had at least temporary possession of one of the four.¹²⁷

Among the currently accessible Pope correspondence, there is no clear reference to his possession of part of such a significant group. Because most museum records of the 1930s tend to record only the immediate dealer source for such objects, we can see how the names of the middlemen who facilitated their transit from Iran, whether they were Pope, Rabenou, Herzfeld or others, disappeared from view. The picture is muddled by a statement made in the course of Pope's post-war activities as adviser to the Cincinnati Art Museum, where Philip Adams invested enthusiastically in a collection of Persian art through the early fifties and sixties. Pope wrote to the collection's major patron about an inscribed, Achaemenid gold bowl later acquired by the museum as it was couriered to him for inspection in 1953. He claimed that it was part of a 'set' with the silver 'Artaxerxes' *phialai* "found at Hamadan about 1932, along with two gold tablets bearing Achaemenid inscriptions . . . I saw the four silver

126 Letter from Fahim Kouchakji to Pope, January 23, 1931, Personal Correspondence 1930–1, A-M, NYPL/AUP.

127 There is no space here to explore thoroughly the suggestion (Sims-Williams 2001) that the inscriptions on the bowls are inauthentic and a later addition, apart from to note that one would have to imagine a collaboration in which the fake inscription were perhaps commissioned from Herzfeld by Pope and added to the bowls for the purpose of enriching their sellers.

plates in 1937 or 8.¹²⁸ This statement is impossible to verify, as it was clearly intended to bolster the buyer's confidence, although the timing is possible. Yet this striking connection between the two caches of unprovenanced precious metal suggests at the same time Pope's own points of contact with them.

A slightly more complete picture survives in Pope's references to yet another group 'find' under unofficial circumstances, the components of which immediately went on the market and moved into private ownership. On June 19, 1934, Pope wrote to Rabenou from Oxford with a summary of the latest news from Persia arising during his recent visit, which officially constituted the fifth season of the architectural survey.¹²⁹

Some extremely important Achaemenid silver has been found at Resht, silver horse's head and two silver plates. Nejat [Rabbi] got them and sold them to Mr. Jacks. He also got two Parthian plates, with a gold rim, of very fine quality. Herzfeld got one, and I got the other.¹³⁰

This brief summary illustrates, at around the same time as the division of the Artaxerxes quartet, the continuing flow of objects through a network operating outside the bounds of official excavations.¹³¹ The 'Resht' silver was very

128 Letter from Pope to John J. Emery, April 6, 1953, from Warren Connecticut, Cincinnati Art Museum Archives. Pope keeps the identity of the owner and an intermediary buyer anonymous in this letter, suggesting that Pope's own name would never have appeared on any formal documentation of purchase, but his wording suggests he was responsible for having the object dispatched to Emery. The gold bowl is now CAM 1963.31 and the two inscribed gold foundation tablets (AsH, Kent 1953, 107 and A2Hc, Kent 1953, 114) are 1963.32 and 33.

129 *Surveyors*, 255.

130 Letter from Pope to Rabenou, June 19, 1934, Correspondence 1921–52, NYPL/AUP; Pope continued, "Mr. Jacks will be in London soon. He is a real buyer and I urged him to save some until he got here and saw what you have"; Nejat Rabbi, who began as a carpet dealer, is pictured in a photograph depicting "Arthur with his contacts in Tehran, Autumn 1932", *Surveyors*, 223.

131 It is tempting to link the two silver bowls mentioned here with Herzfeld's claim to Ernst Kühnel that he saw Joseph Upton with "six silver bowls" in 1934 (Gunter and Hauser 2005, 30). The four Artaxerxes *phiale* plus the two Achaemenid lobed Resht bowls (but not the Parthian dishes) together add up to six, but it is clear from Pope's report that the Resht group at least was quickly dispersed. Herzfeld appears to be distancing himself from the antiquities without, perhaps, giving accurate information about their individual trajectories.

swiftly exhibited publicly outside Iran at the third International Exhibition of Persian Art at St. Petersburg in 1935, and Pope published the horse's head in the *Illustrated London News*.¹³² All three pieces of Achaemenid silver, which had been sold to Jacks and presumably exported from Iran by him, quickly changed ownership: the first bowl ('Bowl A') to Brummer by 1940, the second ('Bowl B') to Pope by 1938 and then Brummer by 1940.¹³³ The horse's head similarly made its way from Jacks to Brummer by 1940. In the light of other patterns of ownership and transportation, we should consider the possibility that the ownership sequence for all these objects ran from Jacks to Brummer via, in some sense, Pope.¹³⁴ 'Mazanderan' became the popular generic provenance for this miscellaneous group of finds, adhered to by both Pope and Herzfeld.¹³⁵ This designation distanced the artefacts from Pope's originally asserted findspot in neighboring Gilan, in or near Resht, but it is not clear whether Pope's 'Resht' statement implies that the objects were found near the city, or in the province of Gilan, or that the objects were brought to market in Resht, but found further afield in or beyond Gilan and Mazanderan. Finally, Pope could simply have been generalizing a reported find-spot in the Caspian provinces. For his architectural survey of 1934, Pope travelled from Baku to Lahijan and Resht, and from thence to Tehran via the mountains of Gilan.¹³⁶

Both the 'Resht' bowls and the Artaxerxes *phialai*, considered as if they were authentic antiquities, are likely to have functioned in their Achaemenid-era contexts as a group, and may have been deposited as such in antiquity. As a nested hoard of silver, such objects constituted a symbolic and economic resource that communicated wealth and social status across the broad, mobile, multi-ethnic worlds of the Persian empire.¹³⁷ The duplication of the Artaxerxes *phialae* illustrates the potential power that resided in the accumulation of multiple, close replicates, just as it did within the layered ranks of bas-relief

132 Simpson, Cowell and Niece 2010, 432; Pope 1935. The horse-head vessel is now MMA 47.100.87.

133 I follow Simpson, Cowell and Niece's itemization of the bowls; Simpson, Cowell and Niece 2010, 433–4: bowl A = BM 1998, 0117.1 and bowl B = 2006, 0706.1.

134 Pope's personal investment in such objects therefore illustrates a further source of revenue for him, in addition to his usual 10–15% commission from buyers and dealers. For example, the NYPL papers contain the example of 'an Achaemenid burial urn' for which he paid \$22.50, which he claimed was worth \$1,000 (Goode 1007, 148).

135 Simpson, Cowell and Niece 2010, 44.

136 *Surveyors*, 255.

137 Gunter and Root 1998, 27–28.

subjects and supporters of the king at Persepolis. This restricted replication, ironically, complemented Pope's approach to marketing, maintaining a rewarding tension between absolute rarity and the enticement of comparable duplicates. The 1930s wave of Persepolitan reliefs, Achaemenid silver, gold and, by Pope's account, Luristan bronzes, all constituted limited edition issues of escalating rarity. The primary market of the 1930s encouraged dispersal and dislocation, turning corpora and assemblages into isolated and unprovenanced fragments. This process still shapes the way the objects may be viewed in their collections today, as *exempla* isolated from their companion pieces. We must take care not to attribute unwarranted certainty in archaeological provenance to any of these groups. But writing their object histories via the unofficial archives goes some way to suggesting more of their original contexts for dissemination, alongside their acquisition of collection histories and sometimes distorted, hypothetical proveniences.

Artifactual histories run like seams of ore through Arthur Upham Pope's fractured biographical archives.¹³⁸ His aptitude for social networking evolved into the manifestly collective and multinational enterprise of building and exploiting both the private economic and the public aesthetic esteem of Persian antiquities. He did this in a competitive environment. The histories of Persepolitan sculptural fragments and both groups of illicitly exported Achaemenid precious metal all reveal a division of intellectual and commercial interest between Pope and Herzfeld, at least until 1934. It is Herzfeld, however, who dominates the academic definition and public scholarly history of both groups. As a limited investigation of a few of the key institutional nodes which represent Pope's existence in a web of interests and obligations, this paper suggests how his public narrative of the antiquity of Persian aesthetics interacted with his private economic practice. The resulting Achaemenid diaspora, particularly in the United States, can only be understood through the prism of Pope's creation of the category of Persian art within the context of the new Pahlavi monarchy, powered by the acquisitive competitiveness of city museums in formation, alongside patrons and collectors.

138 See Alberti 2005 on object biographies and biographical narratives.

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FIGURE 8.1 *Plaster reproduction of a Sasanian rock relief, commissioned by Pope for the Persian Pavilion, 1926 Sesquicentennial Exposition, Philadelphia. Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection.*

Arthur Upham Pope and the Sasanians*

Judith A. Lerner

For Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969), the Sasanian period (241–651 CE) represented a “glorious revival” of Persian “national” life after the interregna of Hellenistic Greeks and Parthians. He viewed the Sasanian Persians as having “gathered up [and] summarized” in their art the “preceding accomplishments” produced by Iran’s earlier cultures and had “unified [them] into a complex style which is not only rich in itself but fertile in new possibilities.”¹ Having achieved this, the Sasanians were “prepared to create Iran’s future”²—that is, the art of Islamic Persia, the art through which Pope’s name and reputation are best known. Such talk by Pope of continuity through revival of the “Persian spirit” had stirred an assembled group of high-ranking officials (including Reza Khan, the soon-to-be Reza Shah Pahlavi [1925–41]) during Pope’s first visit to Iran in 1925³ and had resulted in Pope gaining access to Iran’s elite—a privilege that would largely benefit him for the rest of his life, and one that would alienate others.⁴

Pope’s belief in a nearly immutable Persian artistic sensibility and in one that was “primarily decorative rather than representative” underlies his approach to Sasanian art. Combined with his view of Persia’s superior artistic creativity and ingenuity these notions inform his involvement with a range of Sasanian media, but in particular stucco, architecture, and metalwork,

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1 Pope 1936, 168.

2 Pope 1936, 16.

3 This influential speech, “The Past and Future of Persian Art”, was delivered on April 25, 1925 and is included in *Surveyors*, 93–110. For an idea of its politico-religious and artistic repercussions, see Grigor 2004A.

4 The historical, political and intellectual environment in which Pope found himself had been developing in Iran since the late nineteenth century; for an insightful discussion of its sources, see Grigor 2007. His friendship with Reza Shah Pahlavi continued with his son, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, and was instrumental in the Popes’ move to Shiraz and the reestablishment there of the Asia Institute.

the three aspects of Sasanian art that are discussed here. His view that Sasanian art was also a prelude to early Islamic art and a means of understanding its identifying features explains his strong desire to excavate the Sasanian-early Islamic site of Istakhr—discussion of which will conclude this article.⁵

Some Background

A controversial and complex figure in the worlds of art collecting and scholarship, Pope navigated both, not always with success but with unrelieved enthusiasm. His devotion to Persia (to use the name by which he first knew the country) and to the many facets of its art cannot be doubted, and his promotion of the study and collecting of Persian art still shapes many of our perceptions.⁶ His various undertakings—the Photographic Survey of Persian Islamic Architecture, later known as the Architectural Survey of Islamic Monuments in Iran and Afghanistan (1929–39);⁷ the international exhibitions of Persian/

5 Other excavations in which Pope and the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology were involved are mentioned in connection with sites that yielded stucco, one of the artistic media discussed in this article.

6 For an even-handed (and in my view accurate) assessment of Pope and his contributions, see Goode 2007, especially 132, 149, and 181.

7 In the latter half of the 1970s, while teaching art history and archaeology at the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University, the final transmutation of Pope's American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology, I also catalogued the hundreds of Pope's photographic negatives, many of which appeared in the plate volumes of the monumental *Survey of Persian Art*. The negatives had come to Iran when Pope and his wife, Phyllis Ackerman, were resettled in Shiraz in 1966 by the last shah, Muhammad Reza. The negatives were kept at the Narenjestan, the beautiful late nineteenth-century house and garden that had belonged to the Qavams, an influential family under the Qajars and the Pahlavis, then owned by the Shah's nephew, Prince Shahram Pahlavi (Pope and Ackerman lived elsewhere). Because they were of nitrate, the negatives were deteriorating. On the orders of the Institute's patron, Shahbanu Farah Diba, National Television technicians were to make duplicates. I decided to focus on the architectural negatives, many of which recorded structures that, by the '70s, were in a worsened condition, had been poorly restored, or were no longer extant. For every architectural view in the *Survey*, there were typically four or more that had not been included. I finished this portion of the archives just as the Iranian revolution was gathering steam and it was no longer advisable to go to that part of Shiraz. I subsequently learned that a representative from Iran TV had taken away the negatives, and, more recently, that they are back in Shiraz. Much of Pope's and Ackerman's letters, notebooks, and other written materials had also been transported to Shiraz and, after Ackerman's death, were stored elsewhere at the Narenjestan. I was shown them at the Popes' house in 1969, when, as a young graduate student on her first trip to Iran,

Iranian art, usually with an associated congress;⁸ and the establishment of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology in 1928 with its support of archaeological exploration in Iran and its classes on nearly every aspect of Iranian art, history, religion, and language impacted greatly on the fields of pre-Islamic and Islamic art history and related areas.⁹

Pope's love of Persian art began in his early teens with his fascination with the Oriental carpets in an aunt's Boston home.¹⁰ Born in Rhode Island of a distinguished family that would lose its money, Pope received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Brown University. A philosophy major, he taught the subject at Brown and by 1910 was teaching at the University of California, Berkeley; one course was aesthetics, a not-surprising subject for someone so caught up in the shapes, colors, and intricacies of Persian carpet design. As early as 1908, he mounted his first exhibition of antique carpets at the Rhode Island School of Design and organized other exhibits of carpet collections in San Francisco. He met his second wife, Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977) in 1912 when, as a mathematics doctoral candidate, she took one of his philosophy courses. Switching to the Department of Philosophy, she received her doctorate in 1917, the same year that the still-married Pope was drummed out of the University because of his affair with Ackerman.¹¹ They married in New

I was taken to meet the Popes. Ill and shrunken from his original six-foot-plus frame, Pope remained a formidable presence behind his massive desk—at least to this timid and mostly silent visitor. Of course, while researching this article, I had hundreds of remarks and questions for him, now unanswerable.

- 8 Exhibitions: Philadelphia (1926), London (1931), Leningrad (1935), and New York (1940); and the International Congresses of Persian or Iranian Art and Archaeology in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. (1926); London (1931); Leningrad (1935); New York and Washington, D.C. (1960); and Shiraz and Isfahan (1968). Two later congresses with this title were held in Oxford (1972) and Munich (1976).
- 9 Many of those affiliated with the American Institute (or the Asia Institute as expanded by 1940) became noted scholars in Iranian and Near Eastern studies, e.g., Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79; with Pope in England and in New York, 1934–7); Léo Bronstein (1902–76; at the Institute 1932–52); A. Leo Oppenheim (1904–74; 1944–7); Edith Porada (1912–94; 1948–51).
- 10 See *Surveyors*, 22 (by Rexford Stead) and 44 (Pope's autobiography, *Nine Lives*); also Kadoi 2012 for Pope's carpet connoisseurship and scholarship. Interestingly, the great collector of Islamic art, Edmund de Unger (1918–2011), "was inspired at an early age by his father's passion for Turkish carpets", once explaining to an interviewer, "my love for Islamic art began with carpets" (Cornucopia 2011).
- 11 Although Pope pursued graduate studies at Cornell and Harvard universities, he was unable to complete his thesis due to diabetes, an ailment (along with others) that plagued his entire life.

York in 1920 and by the following year he had established his art consultancy there with Ackerman: his correspondence of 1921 bears the letterhead “Arthur Upham Pope/Antique Oriental Rugs/Decorative Arts” and “Phyllis Ackerman, Ph.D./Tapestries.”¹² By 1923, they had returned to California, Ackerman’s home state, and, still maintaining his art consultancy, Pope became director of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, with Ackerman as associate director.

Pope’s appointment in 1925 as advisory curator to the Art Institute of Chicago with the primary task of increasing its holdings of ‘Muhammadan’ art led to his first visit to Persia.¹³ Accompanied by one of the museum’s trustees funding this buying trip, and with high Persian connections already cultivated in the United States, Pope proceeded to make more contacts, which stood him in good stead for virtually the rest of his life. Appointed “Art Advisor to the Government of Persia,” he was asked by the Persian government to be its Special Commissioner for the United States’ Sesquicentennial Exposition.

Pope and the 1926 Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia

Crucial in documenting Pope’s interests in Sasanian art is the Sesquicentennial Exposition of 1926, held in Philadelphia, for it tells us something about how Pope viewed the Sasanians in the context of Persian history. His involvement with the Exposition also marked the beginning of a more than thirty-year relationship with the two major museums in the city, the Pennsylvania Museum (now the Philadelphia Museum of Art) and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, known as the University Museum (and now as Penn Museum). Importantly, the Exposition introduced Pope to the two officials associated with these museums, Sidney Fiske Kimball (1888–1955), director of the Pennsylvania Museum from 1925 until his death, and Horace H. F. Jayne (1898–1975), that museum’s first curator of Oriental Art from 1923 to 1927 and associated with the museum on and off until 1954, even while serving as the Director of the University Museum from 1928 to 1939. Both men

12 A biography of Ackerman is long overdue. A scholar and collector of textiles, she sold her beloved collection to help pay for her and Pope’s expenses while they worked on the SPA (“... although this represented our ‘annuity’ for our old age—the only form of insurance available to us—we could finish the Survey only by realising this one little bit of capital that we had...” [“1937, ‘Row’-‘Ry’”, February 5, 1937, NYPL/AUP]). Often acknowledged as “the brains” behind Pope, Ackerman’s life and work deserves its own assessment; in the meantime, see *Surveyors*, 56–65; and Grigor 2004B.

13 See Kadoi 2010.

were to remain staunch supporters of Pope—of both his character and his undertakings—and were to hold several different positions on the Executive Board and Advisory Committee of Pope's American Institute for Persian (later Iranian) Art and Archaeology and its subsequent transmogrifications.

In 1921 Philadelphia had been chosen as the venue for an exposition to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the signing of the United States Declaration of Independence, as well as the 50th anniversary of the famous 1876 Centennial Exposition that commemorated the same event and was held in Philadelphia as the first official world's fair in the United States. Persia was among the nine foreign nations represented, and Pope was selected by the government of Reza Shah to oversee the building of a pavilion and display Persian art.

Pope did not foresee the difficulties of this assignment:¹⁴ disagreements with the building's architect, Carl Ziegler (1878–1952), and the contractor which led to delays in construction of the pavilion and its landscaping; mistreatment of the objects, particularly the carpets, displayed in the building, which had become a veritable bazaar of goods from dealers based in the US and overseas; lack of proper arrangements for “sales out of the exhibition” which netted Pope 10% of anything sold; and, perhaps worse for so savvy a promoter as Pope, the absence of effective publicity for the concurrent show that Pope had organized of loans of Islamic art from museums and collectors for the Philadelphia Museum of Art (“In the most important account of the Fine Arts Building that has yet appeared in print—that in *THE NEW YORK TIMES*—the Persia Gallery was not even mentioned by name”).¹⁵ His two-month absence from the project to attend to other business in California did not endear him to the organizing committee, which wanted to reduce his \$5,000 fee by 40%.¹⁶ NYPL/AUP,

14 Although he seems to have anticipated them, writing to Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929), the influential director of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, Berlin: “The Government of Persia has asked me to be their special commissioner to the Philadelphia International Exposition that opens this summer. I have to superintend the planning of a fine building and the assemblage of a great collection of Persian art. It is a pretty difficult task to do really well, but I feel that I must do my best in return for the many favors I received in Persia, and, to be frank, in the hope of receiving more” (“1926 ‘B’”, March 26, 1926, NYPL/AUP). On the same day, in a more characteristic assured tone, he wrote to his friend Henry Rushton Fairclough (1862–1938), a professor of Classics at Stanford University: “You may be interested to know that I have accepted the position of Director General for the Persian exhibition at the Philadelphia Exposition. I have funds and absolute power. . . . I hope we can do something very magnificent” (“1926 ‘F’”, March 26, 1926, NYPL/AUP).

15 “Exhibition of Persian Art at Philadelphia”, September 22, 1926, NYPL/AUP.

16 According to a letter from Pope to Dr. Arthur C. Millsbaugh (1883–1955), the head of the American financial mission to Iran, 22 September 1926: “Since my absence in California

"Miscellaneous papers, n. d." contains a carbon copy of Pope's letter to the committee defending his work with the following:

Failure cannot be predicted of any enterprise until all the resources of skill and experience have been canvassed for the remedying of the situation. . . . How can the enterprise be regarded as a failure when the Mayor himself said that the Persian Building was of astonishing beauty and it had already (and this was early in July) made a profound impression on the citizens of Philadelphia and when it was already acquiring prestige as an architectural achievement of high order?

Barry D. Wood has discussed the design of the Persian Pavilion as reflecting Pope's belief in the unity of Persian art across two millennia ("an expression of one 'national spirit'").¹⁷ Inspired by Safavid mosque architecture, which Pope considered "one of the finest periods of Persian Muhammadan architecture",¹⁸ the pavilion bore on its side "a huge replica" of a Sasanian rock carving, commissioned by Pope from the San Franciscan sculptor and muralist, Robert

[early July–September 14] has been thought to have been detrimental to the best interest of the work, I ought to explain that before I accepted this position or even consented to discuss it with the Committee, I informed them that it was absolutely necessary for me to be in California two months. This is not merely on account of my health but because I had been asked to serve as advisor for an enterprise of great importance there—the building of an art museum of first rank. . . ." (*Surveyors*, 120). As director of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Pope had been engaged to set up the art galleries for the San Francisco War Memorial and Opera House. Since 1921 he had maintained a correspondence with various officials of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, asking for guidance (MMA Director's Office, P 8100: 1921, 1925, 1928). See also *Surveyors*, 126–35.

17 Wood 2000, 119.

18 Although subsequent commentators have described the building as inspired by the Masjid-i Shah, it was actually a synthesis of Safavid architecture, which, in Pope's words, featured "the beautiful and famous Madresse Mader-i-Shah Sultan Hussein at Isfahan being closely followed with various details and modifications taken from the Masjid-i-Shah at Isfahan and the mosque at Ardebil. The turquoise blue dome covered with gold scrolling, arabesques in ivory, black and gold, the huge portal and minarets encrusted with jewel-like mosaic faience will both day and night be a vision of exhilarating loveliness" ([Pope] 1926, 87–88). In other documents describing the sources for the building, Pope mentions "the tomb of Omar Khayyam, Nishapur; 14th- and 15th-century mosque doors; inscriptions, which are characteristically Persian in the delicacy and sincerity of their sentiments" ("Exhibition of Persian Art, Philadelphia 1926", NYPL/AUP).

Boardman Howard (1896–1983).¹⁹ Significantly, the relief Pope chose to reproduce was that of Shapur I (r. 241–72 CE) at Naqsh-e Rostam, in his words, “showing the Roman Emperor Valerian on his knees before Sapur [*sic*] pleading for his life” (fig. 8.1). In the text meant for a prospectus or proposal for the scheme of the Persian Pavilion, Pope writes, “the Persians are quite proud of this monument, as it memorizes [*sic*] one of their several decisive victories over imperial Rome.”²⁰ Indeed, the relief commemorates two of Shapur’s three victories over Roman emperors: that over Philip the Arab, who in 244 CE sued for peace, and that over Valerian, who was taken prisoner by Shapur in 260 and resettled in Persia. Although scholars have debated the identity of the kneeling Roman, it is more likely that it represents the supplicant Philip and that the diademed figure standing behind him is the captive Valerian, whose raised hands are grasped by the triumphant Shapur. However, Pope’s (mis)identification makes for a more dramatic interpretation as a kneeling captive Valerian epitomizes the superiority of Persia over Rome.²¹

Not only does his choice of this particular Sasanian relief show Pope’s innate sense of visual drama, it reveals his desire to ingratiate himself further with the Persian government. The majestic figure of Shapur sits on horseback in the center of the relief, the diadem ties beneath his huge crown and his royal cloak fluttering vigorously behind him. He towers over the conquered Roman, who kneels with arms extended, his Roman cloak, rendered in more regular and less vigorous folds, billows behind him in the opposite direction. The formal dynamics of the composition are compelling, but even more is its symbolism:

19 [Pope] 1926, 88. Pope may have made the acquaintance of Howard through his friend, the San Franciscan architect, Arthur Brown, Jr. (1874–1957), who designed the San Francisco War Memorial and Opera House (now the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center) and for which Pope was hired to design its art galleries (see note 16, pages 173–4). For an oral history interview with Howard, conducted on September 16, 1964 for the *Archives of American Art*, see <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-robert-boardman-howard-13247#transcript>, accessed May 8, 2011. Howard discusses his learning to make plaster molds based on his clay models which were then cast in cement for exterior architectural decoration; however, he makes no mention of his “Sasanian” relief. The “workman putting the finishing touches” on the relief in the photograph published in Wood 2000, 120 and fig. 5, could well be Howard, who most likely was in Philadelphia at the least to work on its installation.

20 “Exhibition of Persian Art, Philadelphia 1926”, NYPL/AUP.

21 Gordian III, who was presumably killed in battle with Shapur in 244, is shown lying under the royal horse’s hoofs in two of Shapur’s rock reliefs at Bishapur, II and III.

the superiority and triumph of Persia's ancient and continuous culture over the West's more recent, more episodic one.²²

That the Persia Pavilion's "Sasanian" relief was of stucco or plaster was somehow prescient: a major element of Pope's subsequent involvement with the Philadelphia and University Museums (and thus with Kimball and Jayne) concerned Sasanian stucco.

Pope and Sasanian Stucco

Pope's deep interest in Sasanian stucco rested on his belief that "the Sasanian epoch was one of the most critical in the history of art."²³ He viewed the dynasty as reviving Persia's national art and spirit, thereby rescuing it from the "sterility" and "inertia" of Hellenistic design and ornament, and from the "conflict of foreign Hellenism with the native Persian tradition" of Parthian art. In place of stone for architectural embellishment, the Sasanians made extensive use of gypsum plaster—stucco—molded into a wide range of figural and decorative designs, and then painted, to cover exterior and interior walls, ceilings, arches, and columns. The especially abundant and varied vegetal and geometric designs were, for Pope, an expression of the "Oriental [concern] with the universal, those non-temporal, abstract forms."²⁴ He saw these designs as expanding upon the Achaemenid repertory of forms, "becoming more ornate and lavishly disposed" and displaying an "exuberant, self-contained vitality";²⁵ in his view, it was this vitality that underlay much of Islamic decorative art.

Stucco for Chicago

Among the objects that Pope purchased for the Art Institute of Chicago on his first journey to Persia in 1925 were several stucco sculptures, at least three of which seem to be of late-post Sasanian date and iconography. They are described in an issue of the museum's 1928 *Bulletin* as "a hippocampf [most likely the Senmurv pictured in *Survey*, pl. 177f], a lion, with details

22 In addition to the nearly full-size Shapur relief, Pope had wished to install "the reproduction in full-size of some of the columns of Persepolis," but only one column was made (*Surveyors*, 118–9; 428).

23 Letter to Jayne, Jayne Correspondence, Box 15/F 8, UPMAA.

24 Pope 1931, 8.

25 Pope 1965, 60 and 65.



FIGURE 8.2

Head of a Sasanian king, most likely from Chal Tarkhan. stucco. 12.4 × 6.7 × 5 cm. Logan-Patten-Ryerson Collection, 1927.442, Art Institute of Chicago (AFTER SPA, IV, PL. 178B).

rather crudely incised, a human figure, seated, and a very interesting man's head... with a Sassanian [*sic*] royal headdress."²⁶ This last was published by Neilson C. Debevoise in a subsequent Bulletin as that of "Kobad" (i.e., Kavad) I, the late fifth-early sixth-century Sasanian king, on the basis of the similarity of the crown with that on Kavad's coins (fig. 8.2).²⁷ The head, however, is very likely one or two centuries later as it shares many features with the stuccos from Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad—the stucco plaques that formed the "Sasanian wall" that Pope secured for the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1929,²⁸ to be

²⁶ D. K. W. 1928, 37–38.

²⁷ Debevoise 1930, 10; SPA, IV, pl. 178B.

²⁸ In her review of Thompson 1976, Prudence O. Harper notes that the head "has... almost exactly the same dimension as the king's head in the boar-hunt plaques from Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad [and] shares with that king's head the trimmed hair curls beneath the lower lip." She observes that "this is an interesting but unusual fashion derived from late antique cultures in the West. It occurs on certain examples of Sasanian silver plate" (Harper 1977, 408). See also Harper 1978, 112; Kröger 1982, 206–7 and pl. 100, 1. Earlier, Pope had posited that the Chicago head was so close in style to the heads from Damghan "that it might have some from the same site" (Pope 1938, 642).

discussed immediately below, as well as the stuccos legally and scientifically excavated at that site in 1936 by the Rayy Expedition, sponsored by Mrs. William Boyce Thompson (1877–1950), the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the University Museum, Philadelphia,²⁹ to be discussed later.

Philadelphia's "Sasanian Wall" (PMA 29-132-1-4; fig. 8.3)

Associated with the 1926 Sesquicentennial Exposition was an exhibition in Memorial Hall in Fairmont Park. The building had been constructed for the 1876 Centennial Exposition and was home to the Pennsylvania Museum until 1928, when it moved to its location in Fairmount Park and changed its name to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Pope had contacted the recently installed director, Fiske Kimball, suggesting a concurrent display of the museum's holdings supplemented by loans that he could obtain from museums and private collectors. It is not unlikely that Pope hoped that such an exhibition would be more appealing to prospective patrons and collectors than the commercially oriented "bazaar" in the Exposition.³⁰ On his part, Kimball welcomed Pope's offer. This established the long and mutually appreciative relationship between the two men, somewhat remarkable on Kimball's side, as any other museum director would have justifiably lost patience with Pope's way of conducting business.³¹ As Kimball boasted in the *Fifty-first Annual Report of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art for the Year Ended May 31, 1927*: "Most notable was the loan exhibition of Persian art during the months of October, November and December, organized and generously supported by

29 Thompson 1976.

30 *Surveyors*, 577–9.

31 Pope had already met Kimball in 1925 and contacted him from Paris that summer to congratulate him again. In his inimitable epistolary style, Pope reminds him about the need to increase the museum's holdings of Islamic art: "I did not congratulate you more vociferously on your appointment because it took me so much by surprise and because my immediate thought was that it was the Museum and the rest of us that were to be congratulated. You may be in for a tough job. At least you have a combination of education and guts and that is unique almost among American Museum Directors. You ought to make a whale of a go of it. Do not forget the claims of Muhammadan Art before it is too late to do anything about it. In making up the exhibitions for the several Museums I am working for, I find that the dealers here want some of them twice what they were asking for similar things two years ago" (August 27, 1925; Box 116, PMA).



FIGURE 8.3

Section of the "Sasanian Wall" prior to assemblage, December 5, 1930. Stucco. PMA 29-132-1-4, Philadelphia Museum of Art, PMA, FKR-B166-F-06.

Arthur Upham Pope."³² The exhibition proved so popular that it was extended into January 1927.³³

- 32 Kimball 1927, 22. The report continues: "Seven galleries were devoted to the display of rugs, textiles, ceramics and miniatures lent by American and European museums, dealers, and such well known private collectors as Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, Mrs. Rockefeller McCormick, George Hewitt Myers and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr." Pope's ability to muster such cooperation and to organize so extensive an exhibit on short notice became characteristic of his future endeavors, such as the highly successful International Exhibition of Persian Art of 1931, the Exhibition of Persian Art of 1940, and the exhibition in honor of the Shah of Iran's 1949 New York visit.
- 33 In a letter to Ziegler—the text of which was sent to others, including museum directors, as publicity for the exhibition (and for himself)—Pope writes: "Since you were at Memorial Hall the collection has been enormously enriched and much of it rearranged. It is being kept open one month more on account of the demand from museum experts and students all over the country. Some people are even coming from Europe to see it" ("Unsorted", December 3, 1926, NYPL/AUP). This was not an example of Pope's hyperbole. Held between October 29 and November 3, 1926 was the First International Conference for Oriental Art, "attended by leading American scholars and such foreign authorities as Lawrence Binyon, Ernst Kühnel, Friedrich Sarre, and Gaston Migeon" (Pennsylvania Museum 1927, 22). Associating an international scholarly meeting with an exhibition was a then-novel event, the idea having originated with Pope's friend, John Shapely (ca. 1890–1978), an Early Christian and Byzantine art scholar and a founder and president

Before coming to the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, Kimball had an already impressive career as an academic, architect, and administrator. Trained at Harvard University, he had held teaching posts at the University of Illinois and Michigan University and headed the Department of Art and Architecture at the University of Virginia; in 1923, he established the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University. As the new head of the museum, Kimball instructed the architects to design the second exhibition floor for the new building to accommodate period rooms, “which he intended to purchase and install as the appropriate settings for the art of their times.”³⁴ Although ‘Period Rooms’ had been common in American museums since the late nineteenth-century,³⁵ they were typically reproductions in the style of a certain period: complete rooms displayed as architectural exhibits. Kimball’s innovation was to use these rooms as exhibition galleries for the display of the art of a room’s period, and to arrange the rooms chronologically, so that the “composite cultural-historical effect would be,” in his words, “to enable the visitor to retrace the great historic pageant of the evolution of art.”³⁶

Pope’s annual trips to Persia for his Architectural Survey of Islamic Monuments provided an opportunity to seek out works of art for clients back in the United States at what he claimed were prices considerably lower than those charged by others. In an undated letter (but likely from January, 1928) Pope wrote to Horace Jayne, then curator of Oriental Art at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art:

of the College Art Association, which sponsored the event (*Surveyors*, 121–2). The congress was held over five days as participants were shuttled from New York to Philadelphia and then Washington DC. Although mentioned by Kimball in the above quotation, Sarre did not travel to the United States. See also the excerpt from Pope’s *Nine Lives* in *Surveyors* 1996, 115, and the news article, “Six-day Conference in 3 Cities on Art. . . . Conference to Be Attended by European Experts and Some Twenty American Curators”, *New York Times* (October 24, 1926), 25.

34 Brownlee 1989, 69–70.

35 For the history of such rooms in Europe and the United States, see Pilgrim 1978.

36 Quoted by Howard 2006, 203. Kimball seems to have been inspired by his visit to the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, Berlin, made shortly after assuming his Philadelphia position: “There he saw architectural fragments incorporated into gallery settings. The approach was new to him, and he decided he could improve upon [it]. His notion was to use not just occasional architectural pieces but entire rooms to exhibit pictures and objects. . . . His rooms would be gallery spaces for the display of masterpieces of painting and sculpture as well as furniture and other decorative arts objects. Thus all the objects would be seen in situ, in order that the artists’ works could be experienced in interiors of the appropriate period.”

I wish very much that I could talk to you and Kimball for about ten minutes. I have got this Persian game absolutely by the throat, but don't know just what to do with it. I can get everything of importance found in Persia and get it out for one third to one tenth the price the stuff brings in N.Y. where certain Museums are ignorantly squandering money. I have got some stuff for Chicago to knock you off you[r] seat, some of it almost for nothing...³⁷

Clearly, Pope had convinced Kimball and Jayne, for by autumn 1928 Kimball had commissioned Pope to acquire whole rooms of Safavid palaces in Isfahan.

"We are entirely satisfied with your proposal of 10% on purchases actually made,³⁸ and a 'modest limited guarantee of unavoidable expenses.' You mention several hundred dollars. Suppose we make this 'modest limited guarantee' \$500."³⁹ To this Pope, writing from Paris on November 15, replied, "Your provision of \$500 for expenses in Persia in case of necessity is generous. I hope I shall not have to spend but very little of it." He then mentions his good chance of securing sixteenth- or seventeenth-century rooms in Isfahan, and, after recounting how he came to be "adopted" by a family of "diggers"—to be described later—goes beyond his charge to purchase a Safavid room:

37 PMA-EAA.

38 Receipt of 10% of the agreed purchase price, usually from the buyer, was Pope's main means of livelihood. In a 1927 letter to Cutler S. Bonestall of San Francisco about a rug that was to be made to order in Mashhad but was not, Pope justifies why he kept \$100 of Bonestall's advance money: "I thoroughly appreciate your side; that you lost your interest on the money and received no benefit of the transaction through no fault of your own. On the other hand, here is my situation: I am not a dealer and cannot be one. I buy for clients not sell to them. My clients consist of five museums in this country and two in Europe. In addition, I have five or six private clients. My services are recompensed by 10% of the transaction. I make no charges for expenses, and do secure for my clients consistently extraordinary bargains... The commissions which I executed in Persia did not pay one-half of my expenses" ("1926–1927, 'A'", November 3, 1927, NYPL/AUP). Pope's activities expanded with the founding of the American Institute for Persian (later Iranian) Art and Archaeology in 1928, although his source of income did not. As he wrote to Jayne in 1933: "My principal source of income comes from services to museums, in purchasing materials, and in working for the development of archaeological enterprises in Persia and trying to persuade museums to participate therein, I am really sawing off the economic branch on which I am sitting" (June 26, 1933, 15/7, UPMMAA). If this was an example of Pope's epistolary bravura, it was also, unfortunately for him and Ackerman, prescient.

39 Letter from Kimball to Pope, October 31, 1928; *Surveyors*, 154.

In the last two or three years interesting pieces of stucco ornament have been brought to the surface in the vicinity of Rhages [Rayy]. I got some fine pieces for Chicago, and there are some good ones in the British Museum and in Berlin. They have now recovered the whole wall of a room and got it up very nearly intact.⁴⁰

The remainder of the five-page letter provides several descriptions of this “wall,” the Seljuk stucco panels that are the subject of a forthcoming article by Leslee K. Michelsen. However, two weeks later, Pope sent a telegram from London to Kimball about:

...fragments of a Sasanian stucco wall, forty-three long fifteen high, three sections making three walls. Rich architectural ornament and royal hunting scenes[;] part [in] Paris[;] part [in] Persia[.] Kevorkian⁴¹ trying to buy[.] My agent has option but must send additional fifty-thousand francs Persia by Monday latest[.] If we advance sum we have option to buy approximately three hundred thousand francs[.] but free to reject[.] Party responsible and gives note which I endorse[.] Proceeding unusual[,] but so is situation[.] Realistic flexible procedure[.] May secure extraordinarily valuable piece very cheaply[.] Except metal[.] practically no Sasanian plastic art outside Persia[.] Would make advance personally but cannot until January first[.] Wire possibilities Hotel Stafford.⁴²

These “Sasanian stucco wall” fragments, as has since been established, came from one of the two ‘palaces’ at Chal Tarkhan-Eshqabad, south of the medieval city of Rayy, and since at least the nineteenth century (and undoubtedly well before), one of several sites in the vicinity subjected to illegal and commercial excavations.⁴³ The stuccos are now accepted as Umayyad (651–750) and not Sasanian, although much of the subject matter is derived from Sasanian work in various mediums.

40 FKR Box 116/6, PMA. Large excerpts of the letter are in *Surveyors* 1996, 154–5.

41 Hagop Kevorkian (1872–1962), the Armenian-American collector-dealer, and sometime rival of Pope’s.

42 “Nov. 29 or 30, 1928” handwritten on cable; FKR Box 116/6, PMA. According to a letter written by Pope to Jayne on March 2, 1932, the stuccos “were recovered from the remnants of a Sasanian palace near Varamin in 1920” (15/8, UPMAA).

43 Thompson 1976; Rante 2015. Only with the Rayy Expedition (1934–6), headed by the archaeologist Erich F. Schmidt, were the sites in the region first explored scientifically. See my later discussion of Schmidt’s excavations at Damghan and the “Sasanian Portal.”

Kimball immediately advanced the requested sum (equaling \$2,000); a typed receipt in the PMA archives, dated December 1, 1928, is signed by the intermediary, "K[halil]. Rabenou." On December 3, 1928, Pope wrote to Kimball that "we have now secured the absolute option on the Sasanian Wall. It is in the hands of Rabenou's brother, Ayoub [1902–84]), but the owner had the privilege of withdrawing it on December 3rd unless the balance of 100,000 francs, as previously agreed upon, was paid. I have paid Rabenou and he has wired Persia." Then, possibly to assuage any misgivings Kimball might have at paying the equivalent of today's \$82,000 for pieces of Sasanian stucco, Pope adds that he was informed that the dealer, Kevorkian, "has been making excessive efforts to get the entire piece, both in Paris and in Persia. He perhaps counted on selling it to you for a prodigious sum."

This transaction seems to be one of the earliest, if not the first, major deals struck by Pope and Khalil Rabenou (1906–61), a member of the family Pope had described as having adopted him. As Pope relates in his November 15th letter, through his connections with the Ministry of Justice and with a personal friend of Reza Shah's, some twenty years earlier he had successfully helped an old man seek redress for the "unjust" appropriation of his property.⁴⁴ "When he tried to pay me I would, of course, take nothing, not realizing what a sensational course of conduct that was in Persia. He, and his whole tribe, have now adopted me as a real Saint, and for all I know, burn candles, or the Persian equivalent, every day. He is the most important of the diggers.... He is the head of a sort of clan tightly organized and disciplined that has ramifications at various parts of Persia. I have had proof of his power, but none more striking than to-day"; he goes on to describe the Seljuk stucco reliefs found "in the vicinity of Rhages."

Pope kept the original of the agreement that Rabenou signed, "in the wholly unlikely case that it might be needed." In the same December 3rd letter from London Pope assures Kimball that "Rabenou is a man that I would trust absolutely and he belongs to the clan for which I did the considerable service that I spoke to you about. I have done him what he regards an important services and, in general, the confidence and gratitude of an Asiatic once secured is a dependable quantity. I would personally trust him with anything." He then goes on to describe "the Wall itself":

44 The letter is also quoted in *Surveyors* 1996, 154–5. From at least as early as Safavid times, Iranian Jews had little or no recourse to adjudication of any supposed wrongs against them; their difficult conditions continued under the Qajars, who were still ruling Persia when this incident would have occurred. See Fischel 1950.

I have seen the fragments of it and they are very handsome, decidedly much finer in my judgment than the plastic ornament from Samarra. They can be put together so beautifully that the joints will not be conspicuous; they are very easily suppressed. On the originals there evidently was some polychroming, a little in gold leaf with red lips and black hair and eyebrows. . . . Some fine fragments of wall ornament from the same building were acquired by Herzfeld some time ago, and are now in the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin. The polychrome was on them when they were shipped from Persia, but not a trace survived when they were unpacked in Berlin. The stucco has a powdery chalky surface and the vibration loosened the application completely. I am wondering whether something could not be done in the way of a fixative to hold in place what colour there is. I am going to make some experiments when I get to Paris [where Ayoub Rabenou had a shop] and if successful will have the fragments in Persia treated before they are shipped.

At the time of writing, Pope had not “seen the Rhages Wall yet in its entirety . . . [but] I shall see [the fragments] within ten days or a fortnight when I get to Paris. . . . Still hopeful for the fine 16th century room.” By acquiring such a room, Kimball would be able to display whole ensembles of three of what Pope considered the “four periods of Persian art of major importance.” These were, as he enumerated in a letter to Kimball of December 26, 1928, “Achamaenian [*sic*] 530–321 BC; Sasanian 222–637 AD; Califat, Mogul [*sic*] and Timourid tenth to fourteenth centuries and Safavidian sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Since I am now sure of getting a sixteenth century room [the “Persian Cubiculum” 1930–3-1a–d], we could by getting these two stucco walls have three of the four periods represented by examples of interior architecture. Of course, no such thing as an Achaemenian room exists unless you except the so-called tomb of Cyrus.”⁴⁵

Thus, the “Walls of a Sasanian Room” was formally acquired in 1929, its provenance registered as “Chahan Takun [*sic*], near Varamin”, and its elements later recorded by the museum’s registrar as “comprising approximately sixty-five fragments reassembled and partially restored, portraying a Sasanian king hunting the boar; revetment of boars; heads in medallions enclosed in beaded circles; border of fluted Calyxes enclosing rosettes. Frieze of medallions enclosing alternately grape-vine leaves and bunches of grapes, with border of rosettes. Repeat design of square units; five-lobed grape-vine leaves alternating with swimming ducks; frieze of human head[s] framed by two scrolled

45 Box 116/6, PMA; *Surveyors*, 155–6.

leaves. . . . (Installed fragments) L. 2m115 H. 2m17. Fragments chipped, broken and restored.”

With the pieces packed, Pope sent an undated note from Berlin to Jayne, that the “entire Sasanian wall [will] probably arrive September 1st [1929].” This note marks the start of the frustrating saga of the wall’s many units arriving in spurts (with one shipment water-logged)⁴⁶ and some not arriving at all. As late as September 19, 1932, a hopeful Kimball wrote to Pope:

We have unpacked the new shipment of stucco and find it to consist merely of ten more plaques of the large heads of winged personages—of the series which Rabenou indicated as forming the base of the wall. We hitherto had only five of these plaques and a small fragment of another. All told they now would suffice to form a base for more than half the amount of wall paneling. Clearly, however, they do not yet constitute all that was still missing. Not only was there presumably more of this base, but we lack (besides other parts) one entire panel of what Rabenou called the ‘feuille de vigne et petit oiseau.’ Of course we may now have all that ever was, but as this present shipment showed up after so long, perhaps there is still more of the wall floating about Persia, Marseilles or Paris.⁴⁷

On his side, Pope appears somewhat disconcerted, replying somewhat hastily:

I am quite dashed to hear that all the stucco did not arrive. We shall get it yet. It is not in Persia, but in Paris. It has probably been packed up with other things and sent to storage. You have not yet received the plaques with the little semi-circular arches [a decorative motif that Pope wished to publish in the *Survey*, mentioned below]. I have just gotten your letter and am leaving in an hour or so for Persia, so I can’t do much about it, as I can’t get Rabenou on Sunday, but I have sent him your letter and mine, and can guarantee he will make a systematic search of everything that might contain these plaques . . . He will kill himself to complete this order

46 At least one case had been delayed in Marseille and while there got wet. Taking it upon herself to reply for Pope, Ackerman informed Kimball that the water “will do no harm if you are careful about unpacking it. Be sure that it is very thoroughly dried before you undo the cases. Then the stucco will set again and the dust can be brushed off.” Closing her note, she writes: “Sorry there has been so much delay but as you know, buying direct from the orient is not like buying from a Paris dealer. The difficulties are always numerous and everything goes very slowly” (Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141, F. 8, PMA).

47 Box 166/7, PMA.

to Pennsylvania. Once more, patience. I am filled with chagrin that it has not been handled more swiftly and promptly, but when everything is fitted up, I think you will be proud and pleased.⁴⁸

To help the museum piece the wall together, Pope had sent a diagram that Rabenou had made “some time ago,” “from memory,” and on which Rabenou had written: “J’espère qu’avec cette dessin ne sera pas difficile d’assembler cette pieces.” But that was not the case (hence Kimball’s reference to the “feuille de vigne et petit oiseau” in his 1932 letter quoted above).

As the Philadelphia Museum of Art file photograph, dated “12/5/30,” shows (fig. 8.3), the various parts of the “wall” formed a giant jigsaw puzzle, made all the more impossible to assemble by its elements arriving piecemeal in separate shipments. Two years earlier, a frustrated Jayne informed Pope that, in spite of working for two days with Rabenou’s diagram in hand, “the light has not yet come upon us.”⁴⁹ At that point, so many pieces were missing that, according to Jayne, “As it now stands, there is no possible use in shipping any of it to London [for the International Exhibition of Persian Art in London, scheduled to open at the Royal Academy on January 7, 1931] for it wouldn’t look like anything. We could, by judicious restoring make something out of it when it is installed permanently, but if the missing elements are anywhere to be found of course we want them. . . . You can be assured I have exercised all my ingenuity in trying to put it together according to the diagram and it simply can’t be done.”

Nevertheless, despite Jayne’s misgivings, fifty pieces of the wall were shipped from Philadelphia to London. The ever-patient Kimball requested from Pope “good photos of the wall while it’s on display,” to which Pope replied:

48 Box 166/7, PMA. The remainder of this letter shows how protective Pope was of the Rabenous. He likely did not wish to jeopardize his relationship with them as they seem to have charged him less than other clients; this allowed Pope to sell the material more easily, even though his 10% from the buyer would be lower: “It might seem to some suspicious people that [Ayoub] Rabenou has been trying the trick of holding out things for future private sale. I can assure you this is not the case. His business has expanded from that of a peddler in 1923 to that of the antiquaire doing the biggest business in Persian art in the world. He has not expanded his methods quite as rapidly and has tried to carry too much in his own head. Whatever he may do to rivals in Persia who have tried to overcome him, by every type of Oriental finesse, with me and with all the museums with whom he has dealings he has been absolutely on the level. The Louvre have just been buying from him and they tell me they are mightily please with what they got, and they have the best of good will toward him.”

49 Near East-Iran, Persian Expedition (1930)—Director’s Office, June 5, 1930, UPMAA.

... that is exceedingly difficult, as we have had to place it very high in the gallery. It looks very handsome. I have not yet verified with Rabenou re assemblage of it, which differs a little from that shown in your photograph of the pieces laid out on the floor [fig. 8.3]. If I can possibly get photographs of it in its present arrangement, I will send copies to you, with Rabenou's comments and corrections.⁵⁰

The wall was no. 75 in the *Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art*: "Stucco relief wall (in sections), from the ruins of Chahār Tāqān, near Tehran(?), Sāsānian, v–vi cent. Height 38 cm."⁵¹ Unfortunately, the remainder of the entry read: "Lent by PENNSYLVANIAN MUSEUM, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia." A now chagrined Fiske Kimball wrote to Pope:

I am told by someone who saw the exhibition that the Sasanian and mosaic revetments on display are labeled and marked as lent by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. I hope my informant is mistaken. It would really be too bad if we didn't get a little credit after all our trouble.⁵²

With the stucco back from London, Kimball and Jayne continued to await the remainder of the plaques. On one of his visits to New York in 1932, Pope wrote Kimball, asking if "the rest of the Sasanian stucco arrived?" and requesting: "If you are going to unpack it, to look at it, there are one or two pieces there of considerable importance for architecture and ornament, and we would like to have them for the Survey, especially the row of little arcades."⁵³ Yet another portion of the Sasanian Wall was shipped to Philadelphia by Rabenou, either from the original group or a more recent find purchased separately: an "Invoice of Purchased Merchandise, Paris, 8th July 1932" from Rabenou and in the PMA Archives is for "1 case containing: 11 pieces of Persian stuck, origin Persia, 5th century coming from diggings in the seller's own estate in Persia.... These goods are certified by the seller to have been made prior to 1830."⁵⁴

50 January 17, 1931; Series IV, Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141, F. 7, PMA. Whether Pope attempted this is uncertain, as no photographs of the Sasanian wall in London survive in the archives I was able to investigate.

51 London 1931, 51.

52 January 27, 1931; Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141, F.7, PMA.

53 April 12, 1931; Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141, F. 10, PMA.

54 Box 166/7, PMA.

Responding to a letter from Pope, the ever-patient Kimball carefully states:

I was not complaining about the stucco but I am delighted you feel there will still be more of it. Of course we should love to have the plaques with the semi-circular arches for which you and Rabenou are still looking.⁵⁵

This decorative band of arcades, mentioned here and earlier, seems never to have shown up; indeed, they do not appear in the *Survey*.

Once the plaques were displayed in London, mutterings about their genuineness began. As Pope wrote to Kimball some time after the Exhibition, "The Sasanian stucco has been a cruel strain on our German friends. They have only fragments and we have the real things. Both Sarre and Kuhnelt [sic] would thank God on their knees if someone would call the Philadelphia stucco false."⁵⁶ In further reassurance that the stucco was genuine, Pope suggested that Kimball write to Ugo Monneret de Villard (1881–1954), the architectural historian and archaeologist, "the best man living in Sasanian architecture and ornament" and "one of the two or three really formidable scholars in the field of Persian studies. He says that the stucco is really magnificent and is anxious to publish it. . . .

I am sorry to put the Museum to even a nickel's worth of expense now but I am sure that this is a desirable procedure that will fortify one of the Museum's most important possessions against any whispering campaign and will at the same time be a real service to the history of Persian art. Don't think for a moment because I am taking measures to forestall any aspersions that I have any misgivings myself about the authenticity. . . . But I had plenty of chance to see what inter-institutional and even international jealousies can do in deflecting unconsciously men's mental processes even in the history of art this last year.⁵⁷

Pope was referring to the "Commission of Inquiry" that took place shortly after the Exhibition ended and is the subject of the following section. Kimball did send Monneret de Villard photographs with the request that he write about the reliefs, adding "you will be flattered I am sure to know how highly Dr. Pope speaks of your knowledge and position in the field of Persian

55 October 14, 1932; Box 166/7, PMA.

56 September 18, 1931, Box 166/7, PMA.

57 Box 166/7, PMA.

studies.⁵⁸ Neither Monneret's answer—nor his article on the stuccos—appears in any of the Philadelphia Museum of Art's archives or in those of Monneret himself.⁵⁹ It is doubtful that Pope would suggest his friend Monneret to Kimball if Monneret had not expressed his approval of the stuccos. However, the absence of any writing by Monneret about the stuccos and my discovery that much of what Pope told Kimball and others about Monneret's situation in Fascist Italy does not comport with the facts of Monneret's life, leads me to wonder if this exchange with Kimball were not an example of Pope's tendency to believe his own hyperbole.

Despite the missing pieces, the stuccos, assembled into three panels, were finally displayed in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, along with stucco from Damghan (to be discussed later), in November 1932.⁶⁰ They were the initial part of an exhibition entitled "Persian Art and Its Influences," an aim of which, according to Jayne, was "to demonstrate how great has been the debt of all Western art to Persian inspiration since the earliest times."⁶¹ Not surprisingly, this and similar statements in the article reveal how deeply Jayne had absorbed Pope's views.

The three panels, each composed of individual plaques—as noted by Deborah Thompson, heavily and incorrectly restored⁶²—were arranged so that the central panel consisted of two plaques of the mounted king, one placed above the other, set to either side of the two plaques of fleeing boars, also set one above the other. There may have been more of these (and other) plaques—perhaps some of those seemingly lost on their way to Philadelphia but found and resold by the Rabenous, or some from the original excavations that were kept from Pope, or the site continued to be "mined" after Pope acquired the Philadelphia "wall." Be that as it may, plaques with the same subjects—genuine or copies—continued to appear on the market.⁶³ The "Sasanian Wall" was on view for the opening of the Oriental wing (see below), but by 1972 had

58 October 7, 1931; FKR Box 14/8, PMA.

59 I am grateful to Silvia Armando for checking in the Monneret archives in Rome (www.archeologica.librai.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/169/fondo-ugo-monneret, accessed October 6, 2012).

60 Jayne 1933, with photograph on page 50 of the assembled "Panel in Stucco: A Royal Boar Hunt. Excavated at Chahar Takua [*sic*], Sasanian Persia, III–VI century."

61 Jayne 1933, 49.

62 Thompson 1974, 93 and 95; Thompson 1976, 9.

63 Thus, the stucco plaque of a king on horseback given by the dealer Nasli M. Heeramanek to the Los Angeles County Museum (M.76.174.250). Some years earlier, it had been offered for sale by K. Rabenou, LTD, New York, NY (*Art Journal* xxvi/1 [1966/1967], 173), and had appeared in Grabar 1967, no. 69. Thompson observes that this plaque "has not undergone

been removed, and the Boar Hunt panel, along with another, displayed at the University Museum.⁶⁴

'L'Affaire Dimand'

During the 1931 Exhibition of Persian Art, a bizarre but troubling incident involving Pope and Sasanian stucco was the accusation by Maurice S. Dimand (1892–1986), then in charge of Islamic art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art,⁶⁵ that the stuccos on display, as well as other objects, were false. After pleading too much work to allow him to travel to London, Dimand showed up unannounced with museum trustee, George D. Pratt (1869–1935).⁶⁶ The two (Pratt

remounting on a plaster-of-Paris base, as is the case of all the excavated and purchased plaques" (Thompson 1976, 95, n. 2), so it is possible that it was a later discovery or copy.

64 Felice Fischer, email of September 26, 2012. They remained at the University Museum until 2001, when they were placed in the Philadelphia Museum's off-site storage facility during renovation of the University Museum; to my knowledge, they are still there.

65 Dimand had studied with Josef Strzygowski in Vienna and was expert in textiles. He arrived at the Metropolitan Museum in 1923 as a research assistant in the Egyptian department, and in 1925, as associate curator of decorative arts, took charge of the new section for Islamic art in the Department of Decorative Arts; in 1933 he became the museum's first full Curator of Near Eastern Art, a position he held until retiring in 1959.

66 Dimand's arrival, however, was no surprise to Pope. Reporting to Pope on the publicity for the 1931 Exhibition, Myron Bement Smith, executive secretary of the American Institute, already suspicious of Dimand, writes: "Our Gallician friend is the only thorn in the flesh. I am showing him every possible courtesy, as you can see. If two directors [of the Institute] become disaffected, we can lay it to this gentleman's credit. He is sailing for the Exhibition on the 20th of January, George D. Pratt on the same boat. He gets \$1,000 for the trip as a delegate of his institution. Joe Breck [1885–1933; Assistant Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a member of the Board of Directors of The American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology] is coming also, but on a different boat. When I see you I will tell you what I know about this situation. It's rather nasty. . . ." ("American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology", 17 December 1930, NYPL/AUP). Smith adds, "our friend confides in me quite frankly, possibly because of my youthful inexperience. When he makes unfortunate statements I assure him that he must be wrong. Meanwhile I am able to watch him, which is, I think, most important for us. Please do all that you can to see that this friendly relation between him and me is not ruptured. I think it would be better if his name and mine are never used together." How much of this is real and reflects Smith's concern for Pope and the well-being of the Institute, and how much is Smith's desire to ingratiate himself with both men is difficult to assess. In 1933, Smith, who had angered several Institute officials with his high-handed ways, left the Institute for an American Council of Learned Societies grant to study architecture in Isfahan. Smith never knew

apparently believing all that Dimand told him) embarked on a campaign to discredit Pope and many of his and the exhibition committee's selections.⁶⁷ As Pope described the incident to Jayne:

You will be interested to know that Dimand arrived here, having planned a deliberate campaign of slander and vilification. He attacked a great number of pieces in the Exhibition as false, indicated that they were there with my knowledge and connivance, told people I was an agent for Paris dealers, that I took commissions both ways, and more to the same effect.⁶⁸

Regarding the stucco, Dimand not only pronounced the "Sasanian wall" a forgery, but as Pope later recounted to Kimball, "in his anxiety to discredit the Sasanian stucco, Dimand, who thought that the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum roundel was part of the Philadelphia piece, told several people that that also was false. It was as you may know recovered by the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum's expedition to Csteiphon [*sic*] in 1929."⁶⁹

that Pope had protected him several times from being fired or that Pope had arranged the grant to allow a graceful exit from the Institute. Convinced that Pope was behind his Institute troubles, Smith held a life-long enmity for Pope, even though in later years he and Pope presumably came to some accord. Smith's animosity towards Pope is clear from his letters and diaries preserved in the Myron Bement Smith Collection at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives and in letters in the New York Public Library.

67 Since 1925 Dimand had nursed a grudge against Pope for his published criticism of Dimand's methodology in an article on medallion carpets published the year before; but it is more than likely that their difficult relationship originated even earlier. See Kadoi 2012.

68 Director's Office—H. H. F. Jayne—Pope, Arthur Upham, February 10, 1931, UPMAA.

69 Undated, but probably July 30, 1931: Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141 F. 8, PMA. The roundel appears in London 1931 as no. 84: "Rosette, stucco, circular, with a winged palmette and a Pahlavi inscription, framed by an *astragal*. Sāsānian. Found at Ctesiphon. Diameter 54 cm." followed by a reference to its publication and the lending museum, "Islamische Kunstabteilung, Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin." Two other "ornamental" medallions from Berlin were also exhibited: no. 81, "with a ram lying down . . . Ctesiphon (?); and no. 87, "with the figure of a standing partridge. . . Found by Turkish soldiers in Ctesiphon." Both nos. 81 and 87 are illustrated in Souvenir 1931.

Ironically, in 1940 Dimand published "The Gift of a Sasanian Stucco Relief" which shows a royal hunter astride his horse pursuing an unseen prey with bow and arrow (Metropolitan Museum of Art 40.58). Allegedly from "an unknown site in Iran proper," it was a gift from the dealer-collector, Hagop Kevorkian, and according to Dimand's glowing

To address this and accusations about Pope's business dealings, a Commission of Inquiry was convened at the Royal Academy on February 4, 1931, chaired by Sir Arnold Wilson, Chairman of the Exhibition's Executive Committee. Believing that Dimand's and Pratt's statements reflected not only on Pope as a Director of the Executive Committee but on Sir Reginald Blomfield, the other Director, and himself, and (it seems to me) reflecting the British sense of 'fair play,' Wilson asked Dimand and Pratt to justify their statements, all of which were skillfully countered by Pope.⁷⁰ Among Dimand's accusations was a letter written to him by Ernst Kühnel, curator of the Islamic collections of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, Berlin, and a member of the Exhibition's Selection Committee, in which, Dimand claimed, Kühnel accuses Pope of acting "very often hastily, and I am sure that if he examined some of the objects, he would immediately suspect them, but it seems that he follows the information of his Persian friends [i.e., dealers such as Rabenou] quite blindly."⁷¹ This charge was countered by Wilson with the observation that Kühnel had been at the Exhibition and was asked to "pass judgment and every item had his approval; he then reprimanded Dimand and Pratt for not having attended the associated Second International Congress on Persian Art, held during the first week of the Exhibition, "where you could have exchanged views with European colleagues," adding that "they said much which they would have rejected as false

write-up, "a welcome addition to the representative group of stucco panels excavated by the Museum at Ctesiphon" (Dimand 1940, 191). Subsequent x-ray diffraction has indicated that only "the plaster of the horse's haunch may be original" although possibly "the rest of the plaque, which is new material, lies over a heavily worn original core of old plaster" (Thompson 1974, 92–93; Thompson 1976, 95, n. 3). See <http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/30002389?rpp=20&pg=1&ft=40.58&pos=1>, accessed May 10, 2013.

- 70 Wilson opened the inquiry by stating: "There has been a good deal of talk within the last few months, which I have been able to ignore hitherto but now that certain statements have been made by two United States Citizens in regard to the conduct of a third United States Citizen, it becomes incumbent upon me as Chairman of the Exhibition to sift those statements, because if at least two of the statements so made are true, it would not only involve Mr. Pope's resignation, but also my own and Sir Reginald Blomfield's, and we should have a very serious responsibility indeed towards the Executive, the General Committee, and our patrons and Presidents who are persons whom we must at all costs protect from being associated with people unworthy of their trust" (page 3). Excerpts from the transcript are in *Surveyors*, under the heading, "The 'Trial'" (pages 203–5), along with letters from Pope and others about the 'Trial,' not cited here (pages 205–7); copies of the complete transcript are in the New York Public Library, and Pope sent several others to the US for distribution.

71 *Commission of Inquiry*, 7, NYPL/AUP.

five years ago is now accepted and that they have seen good reason to modify their views.”⁷²

The Commission ended its inquiry with Pope's exoneration and Dimand's and Pratt's chastisement.⁷³ The Commission's findings were reported in the London and Paris newspapers and in the *New York Times*—"Row on Persian Art Ends. Two American Critics Withdraw Objections to London Exhibits" (February 8, 1931)⁷⁴—and although Pope sent copies of the *Commission's* minutes to the executive secretary of the American Institute, Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970), to "be circulated if anybody is interested among the members of the Board of Trustees [of the Institute, and that] Sir Arnold Wilson will send a copy directly to the Metropolitan Museum,"⁷⁵ news was slow to reach those

72 *Commission of Inquiry*, 8, NYPL/AUP.

73 Pratt apologized for his statements, but, according to the transcript, Dimand did not. In his conclusion to the hearing, Wilson stated that "this business has been a matter of very real pain to me—I make no reflections upon you, Mr. Pratt, or Director Dimand, for coming before us and putting your apprehensions so clearly before us, and I think you will agree that we owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Pope for the very clear explanation he has given. So long as those remarks were irresponsible and were confined to this country, no great harm was done but that two eminent citizens, fellow-countrymen of Mr. Pope should give currency to those statements has been a matter of concern to a certain Embassy. The American reputation is at stake in this, no less that of other countries, and I am particularly anxious that you should regard this meeting as having cleared up all the specific points which I have raised, namely: (1) that Mr. Pope has acted throughout the whole of his connection with this Exhibition in complete good faith; (2) that no imputation can be made against him in respect of any of his relations with dealers or with officials or with the museums, in his capacity as an art expert or acting on commission; (3) that he has no secret agreement or arrangement undisclosed to his principals in regard to any dealers from whom he may have made purchases" ("International Exhibition of Persian Art", *Commission of Inquiry*, 25, NYPL/AUP).

74 Two previous dispatches are headlined, "Sift Charges of Fakes in Persian Exhibition. Authorities of London Display Confer with Americans on Alleged Spurious Articles" (February 5, 1931), and "Denies Fraud Charged in Persian Art Show. Secretary General of Exhibition in London Ridicules Doubts of Americans" (February 7, 1931). A more serious charge than that against the stucco was Dimand's accusation that some of the carpets in the Exhibition were forgeries, made in Berlin and not in Persia. This charge was refuted by H. Wickenhauser, Inc., New York, in a letter to the *New York Times* of February 6, 1931: "... as American representatives of the looms which produced these carpets, we are in a position to confirm the secretary [-general]'s denial [that the rugs are not from Persia]. We can state authoritatively that both carpets were woven in Tabriz, Persia, and later shipped to London via Berlin."

75 "American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology", NYPL/AUP.

who were important to Pope's undertakings, both for himself and the Institute.⁷⁶ Indeed, Dimand's accusations dogged Pope for the rest of Pope's life.

Dimand returned to New York threatening "to resign [along with Pratt and Breck] from the Directorate and Advisory Council [of the Institute]," according to Smith, who assures Pope that "I have persuaded them not to do so."⁷⁷ Smith adds that Dimand will not write his article for the *Survey*, writing—perhaps to upset Pope about his friend Sarre—"[Dimand] says that Sarre has expressed regret for having published the stuccos."⁷⁸

As for Pope's attitude toward Dimand, he seems to have believed that Dimand had been neutralized. As he wrote to Smith: "I can't be bothered to spend much time clearing up Dimand. I think he is pretty well immobilized, and if he stirs or makes any more trouble I will paralyze him."⁷⁹

In spite of Dimand's behavior, Pope called on him at the Metropolitan Museum of Art when he returned to New York the following year, and in the summer of 1933, Dimand spent time with the Popes at Oxford, where they had been living on and off while they worked on the SPA.⁸⁰ Apparently, Pope's confidence in his convictions allowed him to carry on with his dealings and

76 As Smith wrote to Pope on February 25, 1931: "Each of the above named was well aware that there has been a mess in London and that your professional standing has been brought into question. The good news has traveled slowly and has not reached all those gentlemen. Meanwhile any number of rumors are current over here. . . . I am not writing the above to alarm you but for your information. Some of us feel that the one thing that you should not do is to sit down and write impetuous letters, if you know what I mean. . . ." (MBS, Box 33/A4).

77 MBS Box 33/A4.

78 Apparently, Smith is referring to the SPA, but Sarre wrote only an introductory chapter on Parthian art (pages 406–10) and another chapter, "Sasanian Stone Sculpture" (pages 593–600). Dimand was to have written the chapter, "Decorative Woodwork of the Islamic Period," but it was written instead by Léo Bronstein (SPA, III, 2607–27).

79 "American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology," March 6, 1931, NYPL/AUP. One month later, Pope writes: "My affair with Dimand was the least of my troubles. No virtue in being unperturbed. Always a relief to get snakes in the open where you can kill them. There were other worse troubles with ones like Wace ready to sack the interests of the Exhibition out of spite malice and jealousy" (April 14, 1931, MBS, Box 33). A. J. B. Wace (1879–1957) had been Director of the British School in Athens and, at the time of planning for the 1931 Exhibition, he was Deputy Keeper of Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum. He was a member of the Executive Committee for the Exhibition and on the committee for the Second International Congress on Persian Art.

80 Pope to Joseph M. Upton (1901–1981) of the Metropolitan Museum; "1934 'U,' July 31, 1933, NYPL/AUP.

relationships regardless of the animosity he often encountered.⁸¹ Additionally, for all his flamboyance, Pope was a pragmatist and acknowledged his need of Dimand, as well as others, if only for their good offices.

To conclude this episode, in March Kühnel returned to London, “furious at Dimand for quoting his letter, which he says gave an entirely wrong impression.”⁸² Yet Kühnel’s proclivity to see forgeries was to manifest itself in his assessment of stuccos from Kish.

Kish and the Kish Stuccos

Ten days after the Commission’s hearing, the *Illustrated London News* announced “New Light on Early Persian Art: Unexpected ‘Finds’ at Kish—Sasanian Bas-reliefs.”⁸³ Quoting the excavator Stephen H. Langdon (1876–1937)⁸⁴ about a Sasanian palace having been found in the course of the Joint Oxford-Field Museum’s ninth season’s work at the Mesopotamian site, the double-page spread displayed six different stucco plaques and fragments of three others, showing human, animal and vegetal designs. Pope wrote gleefully to Kimball:

I suppose you know about the discovery of the Sasanian palace near Kish, which has stucco almost identical with the stucco of your piece, but in

81 A window onto Pope’s approach to life appears in a letter he wrote to his friend, Arthur Brown, Jr., regarding Brown’s wife having broken her shoulder: “I pull through things often by thinking that it will only be so many hours, or so many days when things will be better and all the misery only a memory” (“1937, ‘Bo’-‘Bz’”, April 28, 1937, NYPL/AUP).

82 Pope to Smith: “American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology”, March 10, 1931, NYPL/AUP. Pope continues, “He is writing a letter to Sir Arnold Wilson which Sir Arnold is having multigraphed and which will be sent out with each copy of the hearing.” In a second letter of that date to Smith, Pope refers to “your somewhat panicky letter of February 27th, and, revealing his growing frustration with Smith, cautions the younger man: “Don’t let anybody tell you that the Institute stands or falls by any one thing, and I think it would save time and friction if you did not talk down to so many people. I am always glad to get your opinion, but you give fatherly advice to many people older and more experienced than you are in the matters under discussion. . . . I cannot be unduly bothered about Dimand. It is his turn to be anxious, not mine”—a misjudgment on Pope’s part.

83 February 14, 1931, 261.

84 The American-born professor of Assyriology at Oxford was the absentee director of the Kish expedition from 1923 to 1933, visiting the excavations only twice, in 1924 and 1926. Ernest Mackay served as field director from 1923–6, after which Louis-Charles Watelin (1874–1934) took over.

sculptural quality nowhere nearly so fine, so far as we have seen from photographs. This, of course, will be a further embarrassment to Dimand as he said the Sasanian stucco [Kimball's "Sasanian Wall"] was also false.⁸⁵

Pope was not only reassuring a client that his work of art was superior to another's. The Kish stucco was further proof of the genuineness of the Philadelphia stucco over which had hovered a cloud of doubt. Referring to the "Sasanian Wall" stucco, Pope wrote to Jayne:

Dimand and Riefstahl⁸⁶ both want to say that the Sasanian stucco is false. Riefstahl said it was altogether too mixed up to be genuine. He did not realize that we had put sections of it together in London in order to save space.... The Sasanian stucco, you know, was found in 1920. I suppose they will say now that Rabenou knew by some crooked means, that Watelin was going to discover some in 1929, and he copied that by anticipation!⁸⁷

This is the first mention I have found of when these stucco plaques were discovered, although from his letter, Pope seems at some point to have assured Kimball that the stucco had been unearthed some time before they were offered to the Philadelphia Museum.

Regarding the Kish stuccos excavated by Langdon, Pope traveled to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago to see them, afterwards writing to Kimball:

I have just come from studying the Sasanian stucco that was recovered by the Oxford-Field Expedition at Kish.... It seems to me there is no comparison in quality. The workmanship and energy of design on the Pennsylvania piece is distinctly superior.⁸⁸

85 February 23, 1931, Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141.4.7, PMA.

86 Pope had known the historian of Islamic art and occasional dealer, Rudolf Meyer-Riefstahl (1880–1936) since his California days when, in 1917, they and Ackerman collaborated on the catalogue of Phoebe A. Hearst's carpet collection. Riefstahl served on various committees in the early days of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology (including that for the 1931 Exhibition); he and Pope maintained a testy relationship until Riefstahl's death.

87 July 30, 1931, 15/8, UPMAA.

88 January 20, 1932; Series IV. Curatorial issues, FKR Box 141, F. 10, PMA.

In spite of his disparagement of the Kish stucco, Pope was eager to take Langdon up on his offer to give the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology "the rights to excavate the Sasanian sites at Kish." He wrote enthusiastic letters to Jayne, who, in addition to being chair of the Institute's Executive Committee, was chair of the Committee on Archaeology:

[Langdon] is sure that one of the palaces uncovered is Nestorian. There is an immense amount of material almost in sight. He will provide staff with quarters, and they merely pay their board at the refectory. He says [the art historian David Talbot] Rice will give his services. He could do it for £800, which is now about 3,000 dollars. A season's dig on a site like this is one the world's bargains.⁸⁹

Kimball is enthusiastic about the work the Institute has done, and so is Aurel Stein and Sir John Marshall. . . . I think we ought to include Langdon [in a list of potential corresponding members of the Institute]. It was really mighty fine of him to offer us the Kish site on such extraordinary terms. A whole expedition on a discovered Sasanian site for 1800 dollars a year is the world's greatest bargain. . . . We will get the credit and it will be our own expedition.⁹⁰

Pope's title at the Institute was "Director," but he had "no executive control, despite the title he bears," as Jayne had been moved to explain when both his and Kimball's museums were trying to initiate their Joint Expedition to Persia (see below).⁹¹ Try as he could, regardless of his many eloquent epistolary appeals, Pope could not get the Institute's Executive Committee to support a Kish expedition. In addition to money being scarce and the existing Damghan

89 July 19, 1932, Jayne 15/8, UPMAA.

90 August 20, 1932, Jayne 15/8, UPMAA.

91 Letter to Wallace S. Murray (1887–1965), then chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State, January 13, 1931, during the delicate negotiations regarding which American institutions would receive which archaeological site(s), and in which some involved parties were concerned about Pope's "meddling." Regarding Pope's title, Jayne writes that it "is poorly chosen. . . . [Pope] should in reality be called field agent or something of the sort, certainly until the Institute is well established in Persia when he might assume the title of director." Earlier in this letter Jayne had stated that "The American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology has been created to initiate and encourage research of all sorts in Persia, and one of its chief interests is, therefore, to see archaeological investigation well launched." He goes on: "The creation of the Institute was largely due to Pope, however, whose energies have been devoted to Persian studies for many years and whose contacts with Persian officials are excellent" (*Surveyors*, 224).

expedition's future precarious (as will be discussed later), the Committee balked at the American *Persian* Institute funding an excavation in Iraq (particularly with so many other institutions excavating there) and was uneasy about how the Persians might react to an excavation outside their borders. To these concerns, Pope countered:

that the present shrunken political boundaries of Persia, which are determined by a variety of accidents, should not logically confine the field of research. . . . Warburg⁹² and I made a tremendous fight to get to Nakh Shirvan in Southern Armenia because of the superb dated Persian dome tower there, one of the landmarks of Persian architecture. Would it have been good sense to have passed it by on the ground that the people living around it are at present subject to the authority of the Soviet Union?⁹³

His confidence that an excavation in Iraq would not alienate the Persians, or if it should that he could assuage them, is expressed in the following to Horace Jayne:

You say a dozen institutions are working in Iraq. But practically none are doing Persian work of the period in which we have (partly by accident) taken an interest, namely, Sasanian, and Oxford-Field definitely wish us to take up that side of it. . . . As to the political disadvantage and the danger in Persia of criticism . . . that we are not doing justice to our Persian responsibilities, I am sure that is an undue misgiving. I'll guarantee to take care of public opinion. . . . If we do this next dig, I'll publish an article in Iran as to the whys and wherefores.⁹⁴

The committee also objected to Watelin as director, noting that because he was not held in high regard among many archaeologists, as excavator of an Institute enterprise he would hurt fund-raising prospects. Pope attributed this attitude toward Watelin "to jealousy," adding that "poor opinions can be found

92 Edward M. M. "Eddie" Warburg (1908–92), philanthropist and benefactor of the arts, traveled to Persia with Pope in 1932. Pope was close to the Warburg family, and though lack of acquaintance never stopped him from seeking funding, Pope felt able to appeal to Eddie's mother, Frieda Schiff Warburg, to help bring Richard Ettinghausen to New York ("1934, 'Wa'-We'", February 22, 1934, NYPL/AUP).

93 Letter to John J. Coss [1884–1940; Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, and a member of the Executive Committee], January 31, 1933, Box 15/7, UPMAA.

94 June 13, 1933, Box 15/7, UPMAA.

about Prof. Breasted, Dr. Herzfeld, Dr. Woolley, Dr. Von der Osten and a dozen others.”⁹⁵ But, in fact, Watelin was not an inspired choice. Having made a name for himself as a botanist publishing on Mexican agave (1900), he had assisted in the French excavations at Susa until his dismissal in 1903, where he had played a role in the later removal of its director, Jacques de Morgan (1857–1924; active at Susa 1897–1912). Nonetheless, he became field director of the Kish excavations after 1926 and remained in that capacity to the end of the project in 1933.

Given his antipathy toward the Kish stuccos expressed in his letter to Kimball the previous year, Pope seems to have come to recognize them as a major stage in the development of Sasanian stucco and, more important, of Islamic ornament:

... as to the importance of the material and site, I think I am on pretty strong ground. I have seen more of this Sasanian stucco than any one man, having examined with some care that at Hira, Ctesiphon, Damghan, and the various material found by Persian diggers—and, what is more, I have studied the drawings. The Sasanian stucco at Damghan is finer in execution, and perhaps finer in artistic feeling than the stucco from Kish. Kish, I think, remains historically more important. It is pretty certainly datable to the 4th century. It has the most direct important relations to subsequent development in ornament, as well as being the earliest expression we know of some typical Islamic motives. One of the buildings found there is almost certainly a Manaechean [*sic*] Church.⁹⁶ The drawings are really impressive. I will try to have them sent to show the committee. Monneret de Villard and other experts over here [London] agree with me that the Kish site is perhaps the most important discovery in Sasanian art in our time. The site is a curious one on which we can do as much or as little as we choose. It is like a stick of candy. Take one bite or two, whichever you can pay for. I know this sounds irregular, but the thing is not as bad as it sounds. We must not forget that our job is to add to knowledge in our chosen field, and here is a chance.⁹⁷

Avoiding confrontation with his executive committee, Pope enlisted the aid of Mrs. Christian R. Holmes (1871–1941), a benefactor of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a trustee of the American Institute (and patron-to-be of

95 February 2, 1933, Box 15/7, UPMMA.

96 This was Langdon's interpretation; Watelin had maintained it was another palace (Langdon and Harden 1934, 115).

97 Letter to John J. Coss, January 31, 1933, box 15/7, UPMMA.

the Institute's 1935 and 1938 Holmes Luristan Expedition), to fund the 1932–3 season. The excavations focused on Mound H of Kish, thought to be the “Sasanian dwelling area to the east of the palace complex” that had yielded the stuccos that Pope had seen already displayed at the Field Museum in Chicago.⁹⁸ Based on the sketchy reports in the London newspapers by both Langdon and Pope (neither of whom were at the site), and the longer write-up by Langdon and Donald B. Harden the following year,⁹⁹ much glazed pottery and glass—identified as Sasanian by the excavator and Pope¹⁰⁰—were uncovered, along with Sasanian coins. But little, if anything, in the way of stucco, figurative or ornamental seems to have been found.¹⁰¹

**The Sasanian Portal: Stucco from Damghan (PMA 31-3-1; 40-51-1;¹⁰²
fig. 8.4)**

The Joint Archaeological Expedition to Persia was initiated by the University Museum and the Philadelphia Museum of Art to be the first American archaeological exploration in Iran once the Iranian Antiquities Law had been passed. This finally occurred in November 1930, with Persepolis considered the prize concession among the potential sites. However, despite Pope's best efforts to obtain Persepolis and the nearby site of Istakhr for the Philadelphia institutions, even before the Antiquities Law was passed Persepolis was awarded to Ernst E. Herzfeld (1879–1948). Herzfeld was well known in Iran; as early

98 Two so-called palaces of the Sasanian period had been unearthed in previous years, with Palace II yielding parts of several busts of a Sasanian king thought to belong to the late fourth-fifth century CE (see Harper 1977).

99 Langdon and Harden 1934.

100 Pope 1933B, 20.

101 Although Langdon and others published reports, and later scholars such as Moorey (see Moorey 1979) re-examined field notes and excavated materials, no comprehensive study of the Sasanian finds has been undertaken, nor, for that matter, is there yet a final site report for Kish. Watelin's chapter in the SPA remains the most complete record of the Sasanian structures and their decoration. However, a forthcoming study by Trudy S. Kawami of the stucco from Mound H suggests that the building and its sculpture are post-Sasanian, specifically belonging to the Lakhmids of the seventh-eighth centuries CE (Wilson and Bekken forthcoming). This re-evaluation is part of a project by the Field Museum of Natural History, the Ashmolean Museum and the Iraq Museum “to virtually reconcile and publish, in both print and digital formats, the expansive—and divided—collection” of the Kish material. See “The Kish Collection”: archive.fieldmuseum.org/kish/, last accessed February 14, 2013.

102 This second accession number represents fragments acquired by exchange with the University Museum.



FIGURE 8.4 *Reconstructed "Sasanian Portal" with lion's heads and feet installed. Stucco. PMA 33-3-1 and 40-51-1, Philadelphia Museum of Art (AUTHOR'S PHOTOGRAPH, APRIL 2015).*



FIGURE 8.5 *Reconstructed "Sasanid Portal" from Kish. Field Museum of Natural History. Stucco (AFTER FIELD MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1940 [JANUARY 1941], PL. 15, OPP. P. 210).*

as 1924, he had surveyed the condition of Persepolis for the Persian government. Having thus secured Persepolis for himself, once the Antiquities Law was passed, Herzfeld offered it to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago with him serving as director.¹⁰³

With Persepolis taken, Jayne and Kimball focused on Damghan in north-eastern Iran.¹⁰⁴ Herzfeld had been encouraging about the prehistoric site of Tepe Hissar just south of Damghan, which he had identified in 1925 (and which, when excavated, turned out to be the largest Bronze Age settlement in northern Iran to date). In anticipation of Persia opening its archaeological sites to foreign excavators, in 1930 Jayne hired the German-born field archaeologist Erich F. Schmidt (1897–1964), who had recently been let go by the Oriental Institute (although in 1935 he would take over its excavations at Persepolis and Istakhr). Schmidt was to excavate wherever in Persia the University Museum received permission. With Tepe Hissar, Jayne hoped he had a site that could provide cultural links with Mesopotamia, where since the late nineteenth

103 Goode 2007, 142–6; for Istakhr, see below.

104 As early as January 1930, in anticipation of passage of the Antiquities Law, the two museums had developed a prospectus, “The First American Art and Archaeological Expedition to Persia,” to appeal to wealthy Philadelphians’ pride in being the first US city to have an archaeological excavation in Persia. The brochure opened with a photograph of the Gate of All Nations at Persepolis (the prized site that probably had already been granted to Herzfeld or at least had been set aside from the competition), and trumpeted: “An opportunity has just arisen permitting for the first time, American archaeological investigations in Persia . . . A cable from Arthur Upham Pope in Persia has just arrived at the University Museum announcing that a law passed the first of February 1930 [*sic*] granting permission to ‘reputable institutions of foreign countries to undertake archaeological investigations’” . . . “This is the first time that Americans will be allowed to initiate archaeological excavations in the one country in the heart of the Ancient Near East which has remained hitherto practically unknown to the scientific world—Persia . . . To take advantage of this opportunity, to insure obtaining for this Country and for Philadelphia some of the sites that promise to be most fertile, the University Museum and the Pennsylvania Museum of Art propose to initiate jointly the first American Expedition to Persia.” A map, with the title, “Some of the Available Archaeological Sites in Persia,” followed this announcement, and the brochure concluded with the subscription terms: “The minimum requirement for financing adequately . . . \$20,000 a year for three years,” to be born by 20 sponsors paying \$1,000 a year for 3 years; in return, the sponsors will receive illustrated monthly reports from the field, and lectures “[and] will be kept in intimate touch with the work and the results. And, finally, the objects found will be credited at each institute to those who will have made their discovery possible” (“American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology, Rayy Expedition 1934,” NYPL/AUP).

century the University Museum had been active at a number of sites; he also wished to acquire prehistoric material for museum display.

Similarly, Kimball desired material for his art museum that would be both historically significant and aesthetically beautiful.¹⁰⁵ He was not disappointed when, two months into the first season (August 1931), Schmidt began to uncover “a construction of the Sasanian period, having a number of large circular columns cased in stucco in conventionalized ornamental patterns.”¹⁰⁶ This was the ‘Sasanian Palace,’ its main section consisting of a hypostyle hall with three pairs of massive decorative stucco-covered columns, six feet in diameter, and one pair of engaged, that opened onto a square, presumably domed, reception room. This public section had been richly decorated with wall paintings, painted stucco plaques molded with human, animal, vegetal, and symbolic designs, and stucco sculptures of ibex or mouflon heads (presumably placed above doorways) as well as roaring lions, perhaps originally in the round but in very fragmentary condition, that seem to have guarded the entrances from one main room to the next.¹⁰⁷ Many of these stuccoes were sent to the Philadelphia Museum of Art where, as the anonymous author (Kimball?) writes in his 1932 *Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* report on “A Sasanian Palace at Tepe

105 Referring to his initial season on the Damghan Project, Kimball wrote to Schmidt, praising him as “a most admirable field director”, then playfully reminding him: “Since getting your report [on the Sumerian site of Fara in Iraq, where Schmidt excavated for Jayne while awaiting his permit for Iran], I have been joking Mr. Jayne about the joint aspect of the expedition, since at Tell Fara you began digging at the stratus of 2600 BC, whereas the Pennsylvania Museum of Art starts roughly with the Christian era, but he tells me, as indeed I know, that at Damghan we may get our innings also. You know, I am sure, how gratefully any fine stone Sasanian reliefs will be received, not to mention Mohammedan pottery. . . . perhaps none of these things exist there, in which case I shall have to tease Mr. Jayne further about his choice of sites.” In reply, Schmidt assured Kimball that “we’ll find some nice material of our era. . . . I hope, of course, that the Damghan citadel complex extends from Sasanian times down to remote periods, thus giving us information and objects of a long culture series. There is some hope that we will find Hecatompylos below Damghan but I’m not yet able to judge” (April 13, 1931, and May 27, 1931; Near East-Iran, General Correspondence—Schmidt/Kimball [February 1931–December 1932], UPMAA). Both museum directors and Pope wished for evidence that Damghan’s citadel was the site of Hecatompylos, the second-century BCE–early third-century CE Parthian capital; but Schmidt was unsuccessful: “. . . the lack of Parthian material will always stay a debit in our scientific balance . . . the Parthians can be traced by extensive exploration only” (Schmidt to Jayne, August 1, 1932; copy to Pope, MBS, Box 33; see also Adle 2011). Instead, Hecatompylos most likely is nearby Shahr-i Qumis.

106 *Bulletin* 1931, 59.

107 Kimball 1937.

Hissar”: “It is planned to include the façade, with a pair of the great columns, in the future installation of the oriental section of the display collection in the Museum.”¹⁰⁸ Despite Schmidt’s careful packing, many pieces arrived shattered (even as powder) but at last Kimball had an authentic architectural and sculptural ensemble from pre-Islamic Persia to exhibit.

Using Schmidt’s carefully drawn and numbered plans,¹⁰⁹ as well as his knowledge of the architecture and stuccos from Kish and Ctesiphon, Kimball reconstructed the hypostyle hall with its massive cylindrical columns and arches to serve as a monumental entrance to the museum’s new “Oriental wing.” The arch framed the Safavid gallery with its display of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Safavid tiles and carpets; beyond lay the Indian Hall and its sixteenth-century temple, and then the seventeenth-century Ming Hall from Peiping—the whole presenting a tangible “vista down eleven hundred years of Asiatic art,” according to the caption of the view in Pope’s effusive “Persian Art: Two Interiors Spanning a Thousand Years.”¹¹⁰ With generous grants from the Works Projects Administration, damaged or missing stucco elements were reproduced “from those salvaged so that the whole structure as now seen faithfully reproduces the original appearance of the portal.”¹¹¹ As Kimball explained to Erich Schmidt when the wing opened in 1940, “The reproduced material

108 [Kimball] 1932, 121.

109 In a letter to Kimball, Schmidt reports that “the Sasanian building is cleared. It is a fine morsel for the Art Museum, and I am sure it will be perfectly satisfied with its share. More beautiful yet than the actual stucco ornaments will be the reconstruction of the building on paper, being done by our splendid young artist [Ivan Gerasimoff] based on the plan of [architect Erskine L.] White and the distribution of the hundreds of stuccos (October 4, 1931; Near East-Iran, General Correspondence—Schmidt/Kimball [February 1931–December 1932 F. 2 of 2], UPMAA).

110 Pope 1940, 32.

111 Jayne 1958, 22. *Time* (1940) reported that the Philadelphia Museum “was the first, and has been by far the biggest, museum recipient of WPA funds—\$1,335,000 to date, with more in immediate prospect.” Leading the mold makers was a master craftsman, Leander Weipert (1875–post-1940). Born in Munich, he is mentioned as restoring the stucco carvings in the nearby church of St. Laurentius in Petershausen, Bavaria. He immigrated to the United States in 1900, and, according to the 1940 US Federal Census, was living in Philadelphia, his occupation listed as “sculptor.” In 1933, he was the studio sculptor for the Earley Studio (Rosslyn, Virginia), a firm that pioneered architectural precast concrete panels for installation on a structural steel framework. The firm had been commissioned to make the intricately ornamented and openwork dome for the Baha’i Temple in Wilmette, Illinois; Weipert fashioned the clay models for each panel from which a plaster reproduction was made, and then hand-carved the plaster to sharpen the details prior to each panel being cast in concrete. I am grateful to Yael Rice for identifying Weipert from the Museum’s

was left white, so that there is a very honest contrast between it and the old"; he also noted that, "Since the [publicity] photographs were taken, we installed the two lion heads, and pieces of lion mane and paw in their proper positions"¹¹² (fig. 8.4).

While Kimball and his staff were readying the constructions in the 'Oriental Wing,' the Field Museum in Chicago was cleaning and cataloguing their Kish finds for display. Under the supervision of its curator of Near Eastern Archaeology, Richard A. Martin, much of the Kish stucco was restored, "using wherever possible the original stucco from the royal buildings."¹¹³ This included the gateway—more accurately, an arched entryway—its soffit decorated "alternately with patterns and human heads" that Pope had disparaged after his visit of 1932.¹¹⁴ As installed, the arch framed a painted backdrop that depicted an Orientalizing view of a small, open courtyard with a woman drawing water from a well while another, a large water pot balanced on her head, moves toward an arch—similarly decorated as the actual one—that frames a desert scene with men on camels (fig. 8.5).¹¹⁵

What was Pope's involvement with the Tepe Hissar/Damghan stuccoes? He seems to have had no role in their reconstruction and installation; as already documented, the interest in complete interiors was Kimball's. Instead, Pope served as the "public relations arm" for the expedition. An inveterate writer

WPA files; Weipert was also in charge of the "restorations" of the stucco decorations in the PMA's Safavid cubiculum.

¹¹² April 19, 1940; PMA.

¹¹³ *Field Museum Annual Report* ... 1941, 214–5. Starting in 1936, the annual reports document the preparations made by Martin for the Kish stuccos' display. Their conclusion resulted in the opening of the Hall of Babylonian Archaeology in July 31, 1940, thereby "bringing to a culmination the work of about seventeen years, beginning with the Field Museum-Oxford University expedition to Kish (1923–1933)" (*Field Museum Annual Report* ... 1941, 189). A previous *Annual Report* boasts that the restoration and repairs of the stucco was made "by an expert plaster artist employed for the Museum through the federal government's Works Progress Administration" (*Field Museum Annual Report* ... 1939, 363). That this might have been the master sculptor-craftsman, Weipert, who had worked with Kimball in Philadelphia is a tempting supposition.

¹¹⁴ See pages 195–6.

¹¹⁵ Displaying artefacts or architectural reconstructions in front of a painted backdrop or within painted surroundings such as a diorama had been popular since the latter part of the nineteenth century. While the Kish stuccos were being readied for display, the Oriental Institute had commissioned Joseph Lindon Smith (1863–1950), best known for his accurate views of Egyptian tombs and temples, to produce paintings of the Persepolis ruins. But rather than shown as backdrops for objects, they shared exhibition space with related Persepolitan photographic views (Gunter 2003, 64, figs. 6a–b).

of press releases as well as articles for the *Illustrated London News* and the *New York Times*, and numerous letters to the editor of the latter publication (the *Times* often solicited Pope's letters), Pope was an effective "press agent." In reply to Jayne writing that "the photographs [of the Damghan excavations] I am sending will make up a splendid spread for the *Times* and with the sort of story you and only you can write it, it should go over exceedingly well," Pope promised that he "will do my utmost for the *Times* article and jump it ahead of ten articles now due."¹¹⁶ He also helped to raise funds for the first season, and, through the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology, infused the financially precarious excavation in its second and last season with contributions from his Kish supporter, Mrs. Christian R. Holmes, as well as her son, Carl Holmes, and Mrs. Thompson, Schmidt's longtime benefactress, who Pope also persuaded to join the American Institute.

Sasanian Stucco in the Survey

To close this section on Pope and Sasanian stucco, it should be noted that, for all his interest in Sasanian stucco as a forerunner to Islamic ornamentation, Pope wrote only on figural stucco for the *Survey*. For "Sāsānian Stucco (A) Ornamental," he invited Jurgis Baltrušaitis (1903–1988), the Lithuanian medievalist art historian. A specialist in Romanesque art, Baltrušaitis's approach—though criticized by other medievalists, including Meyer Schapiro—was not incompatible with Pope's as he traced Romanesque artistic themes and their metamorphoses—in particular, those in architectural ornamentation—over time and across cultures. In addition to studying Romanesque architecture in Europe, he had travelled in Armenia and Georgia, as well as Persia and Iraq, searching out possible antecedents of the Romanesque style.

One assumes that Pope and Ackerman were satisfied with Baltrušaitis's work as only two footnotes, signed "—Ed.," appear in the chapter explaining the solar or astral symbolism of various motifs.

Pope's contribution, on the other hand, is rife with symbolic interpretations, drawing on astral and solar symbolism (presumably associated, respectively, with the goddess Anahita and the god Mithra) for virtually every human and animal figure, as well as for floral and vegetal forms. Clearly, Ackerman's

116 February 13, 1932 and February 15, 1932; 15/8, UPMAA. See Pope 1932B for the *New York Times* article; some months earlier he had published examples of the stuccos in the *Illustrated London News* (Pope 1932A).

thinking was behind this, but Pope's luxuriant prose reveals his acceptance of these ideas.

Pope and Sasanian Architecture

Despite the nine seasons of the Architectural Survey¹¹⁷ and the talks he sometimes gave to accompany an exhibition of its photographs, Pope wrote relatively little on Sasanian architecture—other than using it to promulgate his theories on Iran's diffusion of the pointed arch (a topic to be taken up briefly below). Yet the *Survey's* chapter on Sasanian architecture, and the accompanying photographs can be considered one of Pope's lasting contributions to Sasanian art (even though Pope himself did not write the chapter—at least, not overtly). Although the text is now outdated, this three-part chapter offered a mostly comprehensive presentation of virtually every known monument that at the time was considered “Sasanian.” Indeed, the section attributed to Watelin, “The Sāsānian Buildings near Kish,”¹¹⁸ remains the most complete publication of the architecture and stuccos from Palaces I and II to date—even though, as P. R. S. Moorey (Peter Roger Stuart Moorey; 1937–2004) points out, the material “is extremely selective, [and] only a fragment of it was written by Watelin” himself.¹¹⁹ So that he could include a section on the Kish architecture and its stuccos, Pope solicited the Field Museum for the funds needed to reproduce the Kish stucco drawings and architectural reconstructions; Henry J. Patten (1862–1938), the Art Institute trustee who had accompanied Pope to Persia in 1925 and was a major donor to the Kish excavations, provided the funds.¹²⁰ Through an unceasing flow of letters, Pope cajoled Kimball into writing “The Sāsānian Building at Dāmghān (Tepe Hīṣār),”¹²¹ although by the time the *Survey* was published, Schmidt had already produced *Excavations at Tepe*

117 Pope's Survey photographs of Sasanian monuments are few in the *Survey of Persian Art*: only two of the soffit of the Ctesiphon arch and rear of the façade, respectively (pls. 151 and 152B), and details of the Taq-i Bustan reliefs (pls. 166–168), but other sites appeared in the *Bulletin of the American Institute* . . . and that of the Iranian Institute, including several so-called *chahar taqs* (presumed to be the inner sanctum of Zoroastrian fire temples).

118 Watelin 1938, 584–92.

119 Moorey 1979, 122. This should soon be rectified—as much as can be after more than a fifty-year hiatus—when the Kish Project, based at the Field Museum, Chicago, produces the final site report: http://archive.fieldmuseum.org/kish/past_future.asp (last accessed February 14, 2013). But see also Moorey 1979, 122–43.

120 [Pope] 1937, 48.

121 SPA, I, 579–83.

Hissar, Damghan. With an additional chapter on the Sasanian Building at Tepe Hissar by Fiske Kimball (1937)—a much more detailed and comprehensive account.

The main section of the chapter, the “history” of Sasanian architecture (pp. 493–578), was written by Oscar Reuther (1880–1954), the German architect and an excavator at Ctesiphon. In addition to his text, Reuther’s plans and meticulous reconstructions offered a confident history and analysis of an architectural period that, at the time (and to some extent even today), was imperfectly known. Thus, years later Lionel Bier could observe about the multi-domed and -vaulted structure at Sarvistan, one of the most enigmatic buildings in Persian architectural history:

...with the appearance in 1938 of [O.] Reuther’s essay in *A Survey of Persian Art*, featuring an attractive reconstruction drawing of Sarvistan displaying numerous features thought to be earmarks of genuine Sasanian monuments, the building became firmly fixed in the canon of Sasanian architecture.¹²²

The gist of this statement is also relevant to other buildings included in the chapter.¹²³

Paralleling his view that Sasanian ornamental stucco (especially that discovered at Damghan) influenced not only Islamic design but that of medieval Europe, was Pope’s belief that “structural forms developed in the Sasanian period” influenced Gothic as well as earlier Romanesque and even pre-Romanesque architecture. In some of his talks and writings Pope attributed the pointed arch to the Sasanians who, by anticipating the Gothic arch, served as intermediaries in its spread to Europe.¹²⁴ He based this theory not on actual architectural remains, but on his analysis of the “carefully drawn palace set in the midst of trees and shrubbery” engraved on the large bronze salver in the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum (now Museum für Islamische Kunst, Inv.Nr. I.5624; fig. 8.6).¹²⁵ In promulgating these ideas, Pope was following the Viennese art historian, Josef Stryzowski (1862–1941), as set forth in his influential

122 Bier 2002, 44. In his original 1986 publication on Sarvistan, Bier had reinterpreted the structure from a palace of the middle Sasanian period to a Zoroastrian fire sanctuary of the ninth century. By 2002 he had begun to reconsider a secular function, but still saw its date as firmly post-Sasanian.

123 See Bier 1993.

124 Pope 1933B, 293.

125 Pope 1933A; SPA, I, 765–6; IV, pl. 237.



FIGURE 8.6 *Salver showing a domed garden pavilion. Bronze. 64.5 cm D; 9 cm H. I. 5624, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin*
(PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM).

Orient oder Rom (1901)—even though Strzygowski “deliberately excluded the Sasanians from his artistic genealogy and accorded creative originality to the Parthians,” an Iranian people who established their rule on the Iranian plateau and then in Mesopotamia in the last centuries BCE.¹²⁶ Even when, in other writings, Pope acknowledged a later, early eighth-century, date for the pointed arch, he considered it an Iranian invention.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ See Grigor 2007, 573.

¹²⁷ For a contemporaneous balanced discussion of Pope’s controversial ideas, see Briggs 1933. Pope 1933B was published two months later. In subsequent writings, Pope seems to have moved away from making sweeping statements about the derivation of the Gothic or Romanesque arch from a Sasanian model, although, following Strzygowski, he continued to see the *chahar taq* as the model for the “cross within a square” plan of early Christian churches (Pope 1965, 71); see note 129, below.

As Talinn Grigor observes, Pope often concealed “his intellectual dependence on Strzygowski by rarely citing his work”; instead, he credited “the thesis that ‘European Gothic architecture owes its origin to Iran’ ” to the nineteenth-century French archaeologists, Jane Dieulafoy and Marcel Dieulafoy.¹²⁸ Yet Strzygowski’s ideas can be detected throughout the *Survey*. Pope made him an Honorary Vice-President of the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art, and he was invited to speak at the accompanying Second International Congress of Persian Art and Archaeology. Not surprisingly, Strzygowski’s subject was “The Influence of Persian Art in European Architecture,” in which he stated that “examples of the Persian Fire Temple type of architecture”—the domed cube with open sides known in Iran as *chahar taq*—“[are] to be found in Armenia, France, Germany, and Spain. More interesting perhaps than the architecture were the influences of the Fire Temple type of decoration in the mosaics of Christian churches especially in Italy.”¹²⁹

Writing about the structure on the salver, Pope followed the secular identification previously made by Kurt Erdmann (1901–64), thereby rejecting Strzygowski’s fire temple; but Pope notes that a column, resembling a fire altar, within the pavilion might indicate that the building is set in Paradise.¹³⁰ Although Erdmann had dated the salver to the early Sasanian period, Pope placed it in the sixth or seventh century because of certain architectural and ornamental details, as well as the form of the Sasanian-style wings that appear below the building and as the uppermost ornamentation of some of the arches in the surrounding arcade. Pope’s discussion of the building and his reasons for identifying it—and hence the salver—as late Sasanian is at best superficial and was rejected, correctly, by Jean Sauvaget (1901–50) as well as Dimand,¹³¹ both of whom demonstrate that the style of ornament is early Islamic; today, the salver has been demonstrated to be an early eighth-century work, affiliated

128 Grigor 2007, 572–3 and n. 69, 589.

129 From the typed summary of speakers’ talks at the Congress’s session devoted to Parthian and Sasanian art, January 6, 1931, presumably from Pope’s notes (“Second International Congress on Persian Art, January 5–10, 1931”, NYPL/AUP). To the best of my knowledge, Pope and Strzygowski were not regular correspondents, although a letter from Pope with the salutation, “My dear Professor Strzygowski”, dated January 1, 1939, informs him of Pope’s discovery of a “fire-temple about 40 miles north of Turbet-i-Haidari [Khorasan]. I am enclosing a photograph [of it] and a photograph of a Squinch [*sic*]. There was a late Sasanian fortress near and the remains of a long wall. I will send you more information about it later” (“1937 ‘Si’-‘Sy’ ”, NYPL/AUP).

130 Erdmann 1931. In SPA, Ackerman identifies the structure as Khosro II’s great throne, the ‘*Takht-i Taqdis*’ (1, 776–7).

131 Sauvaget 1940–1; Dimand 1941, 202–3.

with Umayyad architectural decoration, which, however, draws upon Sasanian prototypes.¹³²

Interestingly, Meyer Schapiro (1904–96), the prominent American Medieval and Modernist art historian, who participated in a lively if intermittent correspondence with Pope, and who, on Pope's request, supplied Pope with a reading list for Romanesque architecture so that he could prepare for a trip to France, was more tolerant:

I liked your article on the Sasanian palace in the last Art Bulletin. It has an air of sound improvisation which is totally lacking in American art journals. What do you make of the bulbous form of the dome? You know Creswell's articles on the subject in the Burlington Mag. . . . On the question of the pointed arch, you might have shown pointed out [*sic*] that Kasr Ibn Wardan is a brick building and that most of Creswell's examples of pointed arches in Syria are in palaces and in buildings of non-Syrian character (Kuseir Amra, Mshatta). . . . [In a handwritten addendum] It occurs to me that the palace may be a 3 domed structure like Firuzabad [not the 5 accorded it by Pope].¹³³

Pope and Sasanian Metalwork

Other than architecture and stucco, Pope did not involve himself deeply with Sasanian art in other media. As we have seen, his publication on the Berlin salver described and dated a particular structure. For *Masterpieces of Persian Art*, published 1945, with contributions by Ackerman and Eric Schroeder, Ackerman wrote the chapter on Sasanian silver, although Pope wrote those on Sasanian bronzes—focusing only on the bronze jug with panther handle, now accepted as early Islamic¹³⁴—and on “Post-Sasanian Metal.”¹³⁵

Pope seems to have promoted individual pieces of metalwork, and as well as textiles, when he thought they might be of interest to a museum or collector. Otherwise, for textiles he deferred to Ackerman as an acknowledged expert, leaving to her the *Survey's* chapters on that subject, in addition to those on

132 Gladiss 2012, 14–16; I am grateful to Ute Franke for this reference and for making it accessible to me.

133 “1934 ‘Sa’-‘Sh’”, September 30, 1933, NYPL/AUP.

134 Pope et al. 1945, 52; for further discussion, see page 221.

135 Pope et al. 1945, 53.

jewelry, glyptics, and iconography.¹³⁶ But Pope pronounced judgment on many examples of Sasanian metalwork, frequently publishing them in collaboration with Ackerman. Often these objects were reworked or such outright fakes that one wonders how he could have been so mistaken, and if he was deliberately self-deceptive.

He assigned Sasanian along with 'Early Islamic' metalwork to Josif A. Orbeli (1887–1961), the esteemed Orientalist and director of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, under whose personal aegis came that museum's extensive collection of the so-called 'Oriental' metalwork. Indeed, the State Hermitage Museum possessed (and still does) the largest collection of this sumptuary ware, and the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France held several other examples. In 1935, with his Hermitage colleague, Camilla Trever (1892–1974), Orbeli published the landmark *Sasanidskii metal*, which aimed at identifying those characteristics inherent to a 'Sasanian' group, thereby differentiating this corpus of vessels from what had been deemed 'Oriental silver.' That it was published in Russian limited its usefulness to Western scholars, and Pope's invitation to Orbeli recognized the need for greater dissemination of his and Trever's scholarship.¹³⁷ The 1931 London Exhibition and the 1935 International Exhibition of Persian Art at the State Hermitage Museum, held in conjunction with the Third Congress of the International Association for Iranian Art and Archaeology in Leningrad, displayed much of the Hermitage's holdings of gold and silver metalwork. Although this provided the impetus for some metalwork studies, objects that differed from Sasanian works already known were difficult to classify.¹³⁸

As for American collections, Sasanian metalwork was still rare in the 1930s. The only examples in the United States were the two silver plates showing

136 SPA, I: "Textiles through the Sāsānian Period", 681–715; "Sāsānian Jewelry", 771–8; "Sāsānian Seals", 784–815; "Some Problems of Early Iconography", 872–7; Parthian, and 878–95: Sasanian; as well as "The Art of the Parthian Silver- and Goldsmiths", 459–70, which summarized the contribution of the German archaeologist Robert Zahn, who could not complete that chapter and which includes the Guennol and Kansas City bowls mentioned in this article.

137 SPA I, 716–70. Yet both Ackerman and Pope frequently expressed their ideas or disagreements with Orbeli by means of bracketed comments inserted into his text—a practice they also followed in other contributors' chapters. Additionally, in Orbeli's chapter, the bracketed footnotes appear to have been additions by Camilla Trever, identified as "C.T." Concerning Orbeli and Trever 1935, Ackerman wrote a thoughtful review of its French translation (Ackerman 1935, 104–5).

138 The historiography of the identification and classification of Sasanian art, and of Sasanian metalwork in particular, is summarized in Grabar 1967.

kings Shapur II¹³⁹ and Peroz hunting, both acquired in 1934 by the Freer Gallery of Art (F 1934–23) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (34.33), respectively; and the two silver vessels purchased by Henry Walters and now in the Walters Gallery of Art (Baltimore): an oval bowl with enthronement scene, bought in 1924 (57.625) and a plate with a royal couple banqueting, bequeathed by Walters in 1931 (57.709). As already noted, objects that did not fit within the known schema were difficult to attribute. The end of a gilded silver rhyton in the shape of a saiga antelope head (Metropolitan Museum of Art 47.100.82), known since the 1920s and which had caused a sensation in the 1931 London Exhibition, was considered by Pope and others to be Achaemenid. Yet others thought it Sasanian, and this identification has prevailed.¹⁴⁰ But, in Pope's 1935 publication of a gilded silver rhyton in the shape of a horse's head (Metropolitan Museum of Art 47.100.87), which he correctly identified as Achaemenid, he used the antelope head as proof of the horse head rhyton's origin:

This new find is related to a famous electron antelope head found in Volhynia [Koniakow, Poland; now Khomiakovo, Ukraine] about 100 years ago, now owned by Mr. Joseph Brummer, of New York, which to connoisseurs was one of the most brilliant objects in the Persian Exhibition. The two seem almost to be from the same hand, and both show the same

139 For the interesting history of this plate, which was acquired in the nineteenth century by the Stroganov family of St. Petersburg, see www.asia.si.edu/explore/ancient-world/shapur-plate/default.asp (accessed August 6, 2011). For the formation of collections of Sasanian metalwork in American and other countries' collections, see Harper 2000.

140 A difficult call for the organizers of the 1931 London exhibition, the attribution for the antelope head rhyton (no. 10Z) was changed during the exhibition from 'Achaemenid' to 'Sasanian,' and in the final "third edition (revised)" was completely omitted (London 1931, 11). As Ettinghausen points out in his appreciative review of the Exhibition of Persian Art, "6,000 Years of Persian Art," mounted by Pope in New York in 1940, "in the Paris Exhibition of 1938 it was included with the Sasanian material, whereas in New York it is again called 'Achaemenid,' with a question mark" (actually, the antelope head was displayed in Gallery I, which contained objects from "the earliest beginnings of Persian art" into the Achaemenid period, while Gallery II housed objects identified as "Sasanian" as well as Islamic works). To demonstrate a Sasanian date for the rhyton, Ettinghausen shows two molds of animal masks found at the Buddhist site of Shorchuq in "Chinese Turkestan," i.e., modern-day Xinjiang (Ettinghausen 1940, 114–5 and figs. 15 and 16). Two other silver-gilt saiga head rhyta are known, one presumably also from Khomiakovo. One, like the Brummer saiga, is missing its ears, while the other has retained them, unusually upright and elongated. The former's whereabouts are unknown, while the latter's had been in the Guennol collection (Harper 1973, no. 16; Guennol 1975, 107–12) and is now in the Miho Museum, Japan.

severe stylization. Lips and eyes are similarly treated, and the two pieces are almost equal in weight. The attribution of the Brummer antelope head to Achaemenid Persia, though considered likely, was not proved, but the relation to this new find verifies them both as Achaemenid. Persian sculptors of that period, as shown in the Oxus Treasure, the Persepolis reliefs, and now in these two heads, must take rank among the world's best animal artists.¹⁴¹

However, Pope seemed certain of the Sasanian origin of a fragmentary silver plate. Writing to Alexander A. Strelkoff of the State Hermitage Museum in 1937, Pope mentions that, on his way to Tehran, he would like to stop in Leningrad to see Orbeli and Trever: "I have written several times to find out whether the Hermitage is really interested in the fragment of the early Sasanian silver plate."¹⁴² My research has turned up no reply, although this may well be the fragment of a silver plate (also called a 'plaque' in the SPA) that shows the foreparts of a lion-griffin, and which entered the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, Washington, D.C., in 1938 as part of the Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss Collection (38.13).¹⁴³ Almost a half-century later it was found to be a forgery. Given Pope's friendship with the Blisses, it is likely that Pope acquired the piece for them.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, when Pope did promote specific examples of Sasanian metalwork, many have since proved to be forgeries. How well he could discern a reworking or an outright forgery—or perhaps wanted to—is difficult to assess.¹⁴⁵ In 1950, he published

141 Pope 1935, 1 (color photograph). In a letter to Ayoub Rabenou ("1934, 'Rabenou'", June 19, 1934 NYPL/AUP) Pope informs him that "some extremely important Achaemenid silver has been found at Resht, [a] silver horse's head and two silver plates. Nejat [Rabbi] got them and sold them to Mr. [T. L.] Jacks [the Resident Director of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company]; in 1938 Jacks sold it to the dealer Joseph Brummer. Although Resht is in Gilan province, Pope's publication of the horse head rhyton (March 2, 1935, 1, lower figure) places its findspot in Mazandaran, the province immediately to the east of Gilan, a common provenance given to many unexcavated artefacts. That Pope published and then showed it that year at the Third International Exhibition of Persian Art raises questions about his involvement with these finds (see Allen's chapter in this volume).

142 "1937 'Sp'-'Sz'", August 7, 1937, NYPL/AUP.

143 It was displayed in "6,000 Years of Persian Art", the exhibition organized by Pope in 1940: 326, Case 39, O, described as a "plaque"; and previously published as such in SPA, 1, 738, fig. 255, and then again in Pope et al. 1947, pl. 36. During this time, Robert Woods Bliss was the vice-president of Pope's Asia Institute.

144 The text for this object in the *Survey* appears in brackets.

145 It was not until the mid-1960s that it became easier to tell genuine silverwork from forgeries (though some specimens remain questionable). This came about through a series of articles—in particular Dorothy G. Shepherd's (1964 and 1968) and Prudence O. Harper's

a group of “outstanding Sasanian silver” illustrating six vessels that presumably were found with three additional ones and two large pieces of Sasanian silk in a metal chest in the northwest province of Mazandaran.¹⁴⁶ Claiming that this “hoard” is important as the “first sound dating-clue for types other than Royal plates,” the examples illustrated show medallions with single standing lions and birds in discs; a royal hunting scene; and a bottle decorated with a nimbed pheasant medallion on two of its sides. There is nothing “sound” about most of this group for dating or any other aspect of Sasanian toreutics for at least six of the nine are forgeries. Several had already, or have since, entered American museum collections; at least one had been acquired some years before Pope wrote his article.¹⁴⁷ Why did he publish it? With the exception of the bottle and one of the lion plates (fig. 8.2 in the publication) the objects still belonged to dealers: the ‘usual suspects,’ Rabenou, Kevorkian, and Kouchakji.¹⁴⁸ Perhaps it was to convey added importance to the Sasanian objects included in the exhibition that Pope assembled in honor of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi’s visit to New York in November, 1949. The press release mentions that of “some sixty pieces extant of which less than a score are in the Western world . . . nine [Sasanian plates] . . . will be at the Asia Institute’s exhibition, and they are revelations.”¹⁴⁹ The receipts for some of these plates bear the names of the dealers already mentioned; in a letter to Maria Sarre, Friedrich Sarre’s widow, Pope tells her “there will be several new Sasanian plates—new in the sense that they were recently discovered.”¹⁵⁰

detailed studies of Sasanian silver, along with Harper’s publication of her Sasanian silver volume, with technical analyses by Pieter Meyers (Harper and Meyers 1981)—along with a series of Sasanian silver conferences held between 1967 and 1973 (all organized by Oleg Grabar, except the last, by Harper). Even the 1967 exhibition, *Sasanian Silver: Late Antique and Early Mediaeval Arts of Luxury from Iran*, curated by Grabar at the University of Michigan Museum of Art, and accompanied by his insightful and still valuable essay, sported several outright forgeries—completely apparent to our eyes now—but not then (see note 150 below).

146 Pope and Ackerman 1950, 206–7.

147 NAMA 47–47. First published by Roman Ghirshman (1895–1979) in 1947 after it was acquired by the Nelson-Atkins; see Cohon 1996 for a detailed discussion of this forgery and his sleuthing to track down some of its ‘companion’ pieces.

148 A member of a Syrian family of art dealers, Fahim Kouchakji (1886–1976) operated his shop in New York, and was responsible for selling the ‘Antioch Chalice’ to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

149 “Iranian Institute, Shah of Iran Reception”, NYPL/AUP.

150 “The Asia Institute ‘S’”, October 14, 1949, NYPL/AUP. I am able to identify at least eleven forgeries, most likely from the same workshop. All are characterized by individual animals, each enclosed in a narrow twisted rope-like or otherwise decorated frame; by the

But Pope could be correct in some of his attributions, albeit uncertain or wishing they were something else. A shallow silver bowl with a gilded intricately-wrought molding on the rim elicited a rapturous letter from Charles K. Wilkinson (1898–1986), Curator of Near Eastern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1954–63), just returned from the museum's excavation at Qasr-e Abu Nasr: "How jealous I am of the silver bowl with the gold rim you got in Tehran! It is a real beauty" (August 2, 1934). In response, Pope wrote that he "was very much interested in your comment on the silver plate with the gold rim. What do you think it is? I thought it was Parthian, and didn't dare think it was Achaemenid. Do you think it could be Achaemenid? That field is not my strong point and I should be glad to get your opinion of it."¹⁵¹ Pope had acquired the bowl from the Tehran dealer Nejat Rabbi; in the June 19, 1934 letter to Rabenou quoted earlier, he continues: "[Rabbi] also got two Parthian plates, with a gold rim, of very fine quality. Herzfeld got one, and I got the other." Pope sold his bowl, along with a shipment of other antiquities from Rabbi, to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (35–37/2);¹⁵² its 'twin'

use of solder to attach certain elements; and, most damning, by the double-shell technique, which Orbeli and Trever, in their study of the Hermitage Sasanian silver, had concluded was one of three techniques used in these plates' manufacture (see SPA, I, 750; Shepherd 1968, 350–2; Grabar 1967, 40). A number of these works were included in the 1967 exhibition, *Sasanian Silver. Late Antique and Early Mediaeval Arts of Luxury from Iran* (Grabar 1967): no. 26 (Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum of Art, 47–47); no. 27 (the St. Louis Art Museum, 114.54); no. 29 (the Seattle Art Museum, P15622, made of silvered copper; now 64.14); no. 30 (the Cincinnati Art Museum, 1957.386; no. 31 (the Cincinnati Art Museum, 1951.131). Others are: Freer Gallery of Art, 58.7 (Cohon 1996, pl. 16; Cohon observes that the same artist forged the St. Louis plate); Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Æ.I.N. 1731 (Cohon 1996, pl. 17); "Rabenou, New York" (Pope 1950, fig. 1; of a somewhat different style than the others, but closely related); "Dr. E. J. Holmes, Boston" (Pope 1950, fig. 2); "Kevorkian, New York" (Pope 1950, fig. 6); Los Angeles County Museum (Cohon 1996, 14); Cleveland Museum (Shepherd 1968, 349, fig. 39; the repoussé center disk has been soldered onto a hammered wall; shown in the disk is a winged lion with tail and genitals ending in a half palmette. Shepherd assigned the plate to sixth- or seventh-century Sogdiana "on the basis of its stylistic relationship with the paintings of Varakhsha" (Shepherd 1968, 350).

151 "1934, 'Wh'-'Wy'", August 3, 1934, NYPL/AUP.

152 SPA, I, 459–60; IV, pl. 136. I am grateful to Robert Cohon of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art for information on the bowl. According to the museum's files, the bowl, identified as a "deep silver plate", was sold to Pope as part of a case filled with pottery from Nihavand (Hamadan province, western Iran), the recently-excavated Tepe Sialk (near Kashan, central Iran), Luristan bronzes, and a twelfth-century bronze bucket that Nejat Rabbi had himself acquired "from various merchants and individuals over a period of months", although the Sialk pottery came from excavations in which Rabbi himself was "a partner."

eventually entered the Guennol Collection.¹⁵³ Dating to the last centuries BCE, the bowls are Seleucid or Parthian. They allegedly were found together in Mazanderan—already mentioned as a conventional provenance for illegally acquired objects, but also a region for government-sanctioned commercial excavations. It is somewhat amusing to note that the bowls were reunited in the Iranian Institute's 1940 Exhibition of Persian Art¹⁵⁴—although their original owners never reconciled.

Among Dimand's accusations regarding Pope's role and behavior in mounting the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art was that many of the so-called fakes were included to enhance their price to American purchasers. Vehemently denied by Pope, the *Commission of Inquiry* also rejected the charge. But Pope does seem to have been careless in soliciting or accepting some of the objects that came from dealers. Such, it seems, was the case with a Sasanian plate lent by Hagop Kevorkian, who had acquired (from the Soviet Union) the Shapur plate for the Freer Gallery.¹⁵⁵ As part of the vetting process for the exhibition, photographs of objects had been circulated to exhibition committee members; and vetting continued when the objects arrived at Burlington House, even while they were finally on display. In a note to E. H. Keeling, Honorary Secretary-General to the exhibition and in charge of arrangements for display, labels, and such, Ackerman writes, "Re this 'Sasanian' plate see translated excerpt from Kuhn[e]l [*sic*] letter sent over to you a few days ago with carbon of AUP's reply to Kuhn[e]l. K says probably fake and AUP says keep the damn thing."¹⁵⁶ Written in pencil on the note, in what appears to be Ackerman's handwriting, is "Kevorkian."

It is tempting to think that the plate that seemed questionable to Kühnel was the hunting plate once owned by the heiress Cora Timken Burnett, and now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (57.51.19; fig. 8.7). No. 91S in the 1931 Exhibition describes a "dish, silver, parcel-gilt reliefs. Scenes of hunting. Sāsānian, VI–VII cent. . . . Lent by Mr. H. Kevorkian, New York";¹⁵⁷ however,

153 Guennol 1975, 99–102; the back of this bowl bears traces of engraved Aramaic characters. The entry is by Wilkinson who previously had published it in 1949 as on loan from "Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Martin, 1949" (1949, p. 197 bottom photograph); Mr. and Mrs. Alastair Bradley Martin were the collectors behind the Guennol Collection; it is currently on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, L. 49.1.

154 Ackerman 1940, 325: 39L (lent by Joseph Brummer) and 326: 39P (lent by the W. R. Nelson Gallery, Kansas City).

155 <http://www.asia.si.edu/explore/ancient-world/shapur-plate/coming-to-america.asp> (accessed November 9, 2012).

156 "International Exhibition of Persian Art, 'Keeling, E. H.'", December 21, 1930, NYPL/AUP.

157 London 1931, 60.



FIGURE 8.7 *Plate with Sasanian king hunting. Silver, partly gilt. 23.2 cm D; 4.8 cm H. 57.51.19. Cora Timken Burnett Collection of Persian Miniatures and Other Persian Art Objects, Bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1956, Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

unless the measurement in the Exhibition catalogue is inaccurately 2.8 cm larger, it is not the Timken Burnett plate.¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the Timken Burnett plate figures in some of Pope's activities. An avid collector of Persian book illustrations and other objects of Persian art, Mrs. Timken Burnett was a good friend of Kevorkian's, who was also one of her main suppliers. Perhaps Pope courted her, but she does not seem to have acquired anything through him. She

¹⁵⁸ Although its diameter as given in the catalogue is 26 cm, and the actual Timken Burnett plate is 23.2 cm. But in his review of the 1940 exhibition, "6,000 Years of Persian Art," Ettinghausen calls the plate "newly discovered" (Ettinghausen 1940, 113), while the *Providence Sunday Journal* mentions it as "among hitherto unseen pieces," and "the finest Sasanian silver plate in this country," no doubt quoting Pope's panegyric on the piece (*Surveyors*, 321).

did, however, contribute the plate to the 1940 exhibition¹⁵⁹ and allowed Pope to reproduce it in his 1945 *Masterpieces of Persian Art*, as an example of “Sasanian Silver.” Ackerman’s accompanying text in *Masterpieces* identifies the mounted king as Shapur II (r. 310–79 CE) and, characteristically, accords the royal sheep-hunt a variety of cosmological and celestial interpretations.¹⁶⁰ The plate is apparently genuine and carries a brief Middle Persian inscription, but it has been extensively reworked and repaired, more than likely in recent times.

Pope was not careless in recognizing the importance of the bronze throne leg cast as the foreparts of a griffin, no. 11 in the 1931 Exhibition catalogue; nor for that matter was Orbeli, who, as reported by Ackerman, “was desperate to get [it] for the Hermitage.”¹⁶¹ Although the throne leg is now accepted as post-Sasanian—most likely late seventh–eighth centuries—for Pope its decoration and stolid yet elegant form represented the triumph of “the spirit of Persian art,” the title of one of his several articles relating to the 1931 Exhibition:

Even the influence of Rome, imported into Persia by prisoners of war in the Sasanian period, was unable to deflect the truly Iranian genius of this mighty dynasty from its controlling ideals of pattern first and Nature afterwards. The Sasanian throne leg reflects a Roman character although the motif was originally Eastern. Here it has been endowed with a decorative force and a simplicity that give it a marked artistic superiority over the Roman realism, skillful as the latter often was.¹⁶²

The throne leg belonged to Pope’s good friend Ayoub Rabenou, and Pope worked hard to sell it. In a letter dated January 4, 1932, to Harold Woodbury Parsons (1882–1967), an art consultant who served the William Rockhill Nelson

159 Ackerman 1940, 327, no. 40.

160 Pope et al. 1945, 50–51 and 57 (pl. 37) where a typographic error names the ruler as Shapur I. For a highly critical review of the book in general and of Ackerman’s contributions in particular, see Aga-Oglu 1947.

161 Jayne Correspondence, Box1/folder 3, UPMAA. SPA, I, 719 and IV, pl. 240 B, C. Of post-Sasanian date, the leg is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1971.143. Although Orbeli did not acquire this object, a similar griffin throne leg, made of bronze and iron, entered the State Hermitage collection in 1935 (Ks-6267) as one of a pair from Azerbaijan; see Harper 1978, 99–100, for a photograph and additional references.

162 Pope 1931, 14. The photograph on page 12 bears the caption: “Green Bronze leg of a throne, of the Sasanian Period. From the collection of A. Rabenou.” In the illustrated catalogue to the Exhibition, its photograph is identified as “Bronze Throne Leg. Sasanian (?), 111rd–1vth Century” (Souvenir 1931, 8, no. 11), the early date no doubt due to Pope’s connecting it with Roman prototypes.

Foundation in Kansas City, Pope writes that he forgot to show him something “which is a little urgent, that is, the bronze Sasanian Throne Leg. It was one of the knockouts of the [1931] show. The Hermitage is negotiating for it and trying to make the exchange in rubles and other objects. Two of the museums are flirting with it.”¹⁶³ Whether this is merely Pope’s salesman-like language is difficult to tell. He continues that Dimand had seen the throne leg in Persia several years ago and valued it at \$7,500; due to various events, it is now available for \$6,500 but has been offered to him for \$5,000; if the purchase could be settled quickly, he continues, “probably we could get it for \$4,200 or \$4,300. It would take a little cabling and pressure, but I am sure I could pull it off.” Six months later (July 18) he writes to an old acquaintance, the Harvard art historian-adventurer Langdon Warner (1881–1955), who also purchased for the Nelson-Atkins, about “a magnificent Sasanian bronze throne leg” that was on the market the preceding year for \$7,500 and which Dimand had valued for \$6,500. “This piece I could have gotten for Kansas City, and Harold Parsons enormously admired it, for 1200 dollars, an incredible and unprecedented price, but having been told that there was no money, there would be no more money, and no further purchases could be made, I took the statement literally and didn’t harass you or Harold or the trustees”; concluding this crescendo, Pope indignantly writes, “This bronze has now gone into the greatest collection of Near Eastern metal in Europe.”¹⁶⁴

If the reader detects a note of desperation in these letters, it is because Pope was in great need of funds for the *Survey*, for his annual architectural photographic expeditions to Iran, and most important, for the Institute. Indeed, he mentions this in his letter to Warner. Even with the exhausting 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art behind him, juggling these other complex undertakings was difficult. As he wrote to his longtime friend, Horace Jayne, a founder of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology and a member of its Board of Directors:

As for Institute Affairs I am doing nothing day or night that doesn’t bear favorably on the undertaking. The only question is can you keep the craft from foundering a little longer. I will get back into it soon and I know I can buck it up. But if the Survey should get mangled or stuck in the

¹⁶³ *Surveyors*, 163.

¹⁶⁴ *Surveyors*, 167. This collection belonged to D. David-Weill, Paris. The relocation of the throne leg to the United States was via the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, June 16, 1971, lot 49, purchased by Brummer. See SPA, IV, pl. 240C; another throne leg, in the Stoclet Collection, Brussels, is also pictured (SPA, IV, pl. 240B).

launching it would be disastrous for the Institute also. The Survey is really going to be stupendous; it will knock every body [*sic*] flat more even than the Exhibition. It is developing like a house afire despite all that Wace and Herzfeld can do to crab it.¹⁶⁵

Pope could not abandon the *Survey* to which he and Ackerman had already devoted so much in time, money and health. Throughout the 1930s, after which World War II forced him to end the architectural survey, Pope was torn between spending more time in New York and tending to the Institute by expanding its programs, membership, and influence, and continuing his activities abroad, all of which, he thought, brought luster to the Institute and, he hoped, helped to increase its support. Added to these professional pressures was the need to make a living, and for that Pope relied mainly on his trips to Iran to acquire works of art for potential clients back in the US.

Pope did not write about Sasanian metalwork again in any depth or about specific objects except in two articles, co-authored with Ackerman, in their *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute* of 1946: a silver dish, its interior completely filled with a “tree” bearing grape leaves and clusters, flanked at its base by two ducks;¹⁶⁶ and the well-known bronze ewer, inlaid with copper and silver, and fitted with an elegantly attenuated panther handle. Both pieces belonged to Brummer;¹⁶⁷ the ewer had been a “stand-out” at the Iranian Institute’s 1940 exhibition, “6,000 Years of Persian Art,”¹⁶⁸ and Pope included it in his section on “Sasanian Bronzes” in *Masterpieces of Persian Art*.¹⁶⁹ In contrast to Ackerman’s proclivity to see celestial and solar symbolism in most forms and designs, Pope—writing in his usual florid, yet compelling, prose—focused

165 July 17, 1931, 15/8, UPMAA. For Wace, see note 79.

166 Pope and Ackerman 1946, 51, fig. 1; Grabar 1967, no. 51. The plate is now in the Toledo Museum of Art, no. 1949.35.

167 Ackerman and Pope 1946, 58, fig. 1; now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 47.100.90. The literature on this vessel is extensive; see Grabar 1967, no. 57, for the bibliography known at that time.

168 Ackerman 1940, 321, Case 31, no. 35; SPA, III, 2703, fig. 910. Thus, Ettinghausen 1940, 115: “The many fine bronze objects of the Sasanian and post-Sasanian period were a really pleasant surprise. Just as the famous Sasanian room of the Leningrad exhibition [of 1935] was dominated by the majestic engraved bronze ewer of the Tiflis Museum whose inscription seemed to state that it was made by Abui Yazid in Basra in 67 H., so the corresponding room in New York was ennobled by a no less impressive creation in bronze, a ewer from the former Prince Orloff collection (figs. 17 and 19) now in the possession of Mr Brummer (gallery XI, no. 35).”

169 Pope et al. 1945, 59 (plate 39).

on form (“One of the most majestic of these bronze flagons . . . it recalls the smooth-bodied pear-shaped vessels of later classicism—but how much more powerful, taller, and heavier. Pouring from it throughout a long banquet, which the Sasanians loved, would have taxed a stout servitor”) and ornamentation (“The ornament revives in an astonishing manner some of the oldest and most potent of Iranian traditions”).¹⁷⁰

Other than the 1950 *Illustrated London News* article co-authored with Ackerman, Pope wrote little else about Sasanian metalwork.

Pope, Istakhr and Herzfeld

Pope never considered himself an archaeologist. Instead, he viewed himself (along with the American Institute) as sponsoring excavations—such as at Kish and the Damghan Project—and acting, in Jayne’s words “as a clearinghouse for all archaeological projects in Persia sponsored by American institutions other institutions excavating in Persia.”¹⁷¹ Despite his involvement with sites that had Sasanian or at-the-time-presumed Sasanian remains, the site Pope seems to have been most interested in was Istakhr. Situated five kilometers north of Achaemenid Persepolis, its expanse marked with the scattered remains of walls and reused Achaemenid columns, it was thought—erroneously—to be the actual town of the palace site.¹⁷²

In her contribution to this volume, Lindsay Allen describes the machinations of the competing American institutions for the Persepolis concession while they and other foreign entities awaited passage of Persia’s Antiquities Law that would allow them to excavate. The Americans had drawn into two

¹⁷⁰ Pope et al. 1945, 52.

¹⁷¹ Jayne to Herzfeld, November 17, 1930; Near East and Iran—Persian Expedition, UPMAA. An example of Pope seeing himself and the Institute in this light—or aggrandizing his influence in Persia—is the following, written to Joseph Upton: “You say it took you a month to get your permit to import photographic supplies [for the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s excavations at Qasr-e Abu Nasr]. Why didn’t you do it through Mirzayantz [former representative of the Armenian community in the Persian *majlis* and the Institute’s representative in Tehran]? Or if you had told me or [Erich] Schmidt, we would have had the application passed and it need not have caused you five minutes of delay. That’s what our Institute is for” (“1934, ‘U’”, February 11, 1933, NYPL/AUP). Pope prided himself on his Persian government connections and that he had never had to go through American diplomatic channels; on their side, the Persians appreciated that he did not involve American officials, which, from their viewpoint, smacked strongly of colonialism.

¹⁷² See Callieri 2007.

camp: the Oriental Institute, headed by James Henry Breasted, Jr. (1865–1935); and the two Philadelphia museums, led, respectively, by Kimball and Jayne, along with Pope and the American Institute as aegis for the enterprise and to help secure the law's passage.¹⁷³ In fact, the Philadelphia museums were somewhat wary of undertaking so large a site as Persepolis; Jayne preferred concentrating on Istakhr "and only general work at the palace site"; Schmidt preferred the site of Hamadan in the northwest. For fund-raising, however, Jayne believed that the appeal of Persepolis "is far greater and the prospects at Istakhr seem to me equally as rich. . . . It would be agreeable to us to clear the Palace site and let the Persian Government have any finds made there in return for full rights for anything found at Istakhr."¹⁷⁴

The Antiquities Law passed in November 1930. The Persepolis concession which, due to Herzfeld's lobbying, had remained outside of this law, was given to Herzfeld, who immediately sought reassurances from Breasted that the Oriental Institute would provide the necessary funding.¹⁷⁵ The question remained whether Istakhr had been coupled to Persepolis in the grant. On December 10, 1930, Pope, sitting in London, wrote a "Memorandum for Mr. Charles Breasted", James's son:

Messages received from Teheran today report that Herzfeld, applying on behalf of the Oriental Institute, has been awarded the concession for the excavation of Persepolis. It has been further stated that on the application made by the American Institute on behalf of the University of

173 Prolonging the process were two competing laws: the first, originally drafted by Pope, was set aside as Herzfeld and André Godard (1881–1965), the director of the Archaeological Services of Iran, "made another draft which embodie[d] practically the same principles as Pope's (Williamson to Jayne, January 22, 1930; Near East-Iran, Persian Expedition [1930]—Director's Office, UPMAA). See Goode 2007, 147–8. Coincidentally, David Williamson (1896–1983), secretary and then Vice-Consul in the US Legation, was the son-in-law of the Pennsylvania Museum's President during this period, and collected information as well as artefacts for Jayne until his transfer to Istanbul early in 1931.

174 Letter to David Williamson, November 13, 1929; Near East-Iran, Persian Expedition [1929]—Director's Office, UPMAA.

175 Goode has correctly understood Herzfeld's motivations: "[His] hand-to-mouth existence had led [Herzfeld] to ally with Breasted, who, it was widely known, was still receiving generous funding from John D. Rockefeller Jr. Furthermore, Herzfeld had come to dislike Pope intensely. Perhaps he was jealous of the American's excellent contacts at court, his audiences with Riza Shah and [Minister of Court] Taymurtash, despite having no scientific training whatsoever. One diplomat aptly observed that Herzfeld 'wants the Persian field to himself'" (Goode 2007, 146).

Pennsylvania Museum for Istakhr, no action has yet been taken, although it has been before the Council of Ministers since last December, while the application for Persepolis is a matter of a few days only. It has further been stated that the delay in granting this prior application has been due to representations by Professor Herzfeld seeking to join Istakhr to Persepolis. . . . if desirable that the two should be excavated together in the interests of science, I can guarantee that the American Institute and the applicants are ready for the fullest cooperation. It is hoped that the Oriental Institute's prestige has not been used in Persia for any other interests than those defined by the Institute itself. If the report is true it means the introduction of exactly the wasteful rivalries that the American Institute has labored so hard to avoid. The services of the American Institute in securing a modification of the treaty and the passage of the archeology [*sic*] law and developing an interest in Persia were directly solely in the hope of cordial and frank cooperation in accordance with the highest scientific and ethical standards of all undertaking the work. It is hoped that it may be possible to convey to the Persian Government, preferably through the Legation, the Oriental Institute's support of our application, requesting also Herzfeld's sincere cooperation.¹⁷⁶

Why was Pope so keen on excavating Istakhr? He provides an answer in the memorandum itself: "Although Istakhr contains important Achaemenid material, it should not be regarded as necessarily part of the Persepolis project. It is especially rich in Sasanian and Proto-Islamic material which greatly interests the American Institute and the applicants." It was at Istakhr that Pope hoped he would find in its excavated architecture, stucco and ceramics the transition from Sasanian to Islamic forms and decoration.

Three days later, Breasted replied from Chicago by cable: "Greatly regret hear your anxiety about Istakhr I did not know it was included in our requests for region of Persepolis be assured of fair and friendly adjustment when all facts are in my hands."¹⁷⁷ Whether or not Breasted knew that Istakhr had been bundled with Persepolis, one detects Herzfeld's fingerprints on the request for Istakhr. Indeed, several months later, Pope wrote to Jayne, "I have just had a letter from [Herzfeld] . . . in which he virtually admits that it was he who kept us out of Istakhr."¹⁷⁸

176 "American Institute of Iranian Art & Archaeology 'B' ", NYPL/AUP.

177 "AIIAA corres 'B' ", NYPL/AUP.

178 September 14, 1931; UMP 15/8. Once Herzfeld had secured Breasted's support, he seems to have gone out of his way to injure Pope. Breasted's resignation from the American

Conclusion: Pope and Sasanian Art

Just as he saw himself a 'middleman' between the seller of an object and the buyer, Pope connected works of art and architecture with scholarly as well as popular audiences. His championing of Sasanian art contributed to changing perceptions of an over 400-year period of Persian rule that, as Prudence O. Harper writes, "is often considered to be an aberrant phenomenon and is narrowly viewed either as a precursor to the art of the Islamic era or as a form of oriental Hellenism."¹⁷⁹ That Harper could write these words so recently might seem to belie Pope's influence. However, given the awareness of and interest in Sasanian art at the time, Pope's recognition not only of the influence of Sasanian art but its innate formal qualities did contribute to expanding the view of this important period of Persian art and architecture:

By its own excellence and display of vitality, Sasanian ornament passed beyond the borders of the Sasanian empire to become a stimulating factor in Coptic, Egypt, Rome, Byzantium, and medieval Europe. In addi-

Institute in 1931 was seen, not unrealistically, by Pope as "Herzfeld's work." Writing to Schmidt at Damghan, Pope recalls to him when "we applied for Istakhr . . . there was no other application in the field. Herzfeld was telling everybody that there never would be a law passed, and that he was through working in Persia; it is it now perfectly plain that when we applied Herzfeld was doing everything possible to prevent our getting a site" ("1934 'Sa'-Sh' ", November 9, 1931, NYPL/AUP; but see Mousavi 2005, 461–5, for a more—and, I believe, overly—sympathetic view of Herzfeld in these events). Despite such interference, from the available correspondence, Pope indeed seems to have tried to maintain at least some collegiality with Herzfeld. As he wrote to Jayne in the letter just cited, "I am doing everything I can to get my relations with Herzfeld on some kind of a decent basis. I do not know whether it is possible or not. He is a very curious person, but I am doing everything I can. Quarrels are to no one's interest." In truth, given Pope's precarious position as an independent 'consultant' (he was not paid by the American Institute), he could not afford to antagonize anyone so prominent and respected in the field as Herzfeld (he did anyway, of course). Herzfeld had refused to participate in the SPA (although he is represented in it by his chapter, "Īrān as a Prehistoric Centre," and many of his photographs) and he worked against Pope before and during the 1931 Exhibition. On one occasion, Herzfeld humiliated Pope by agreeing to speak at the American Institute's annual dinner—an important publicity and fund-raising event—and then backed out the day before, claiming overwork (Phyllis Ackerman spoke instead). Soon after, Pope learned that Herzfeld had traveled from Princeton, NJ to Worcester, MA to lecture on that evening ("1937, 'Wa'-Wu' ", January 20, 1937; "American Institute of Iranian Art and Archaeology, 'P' ", February 2, 1937; "1937, 'Wilb'-Wilk' ", March 2, 1937, NYPL/AUP).

179 Harper 2006, vii.

tion to its westward diffusion, it exerted constructive influence eastward, across Asia, to become influential not only in India but especially in the art of T'ang China.¹⁸⁰

Pope's eloquent and crowd-pleasing lectures, such as his providential 1925 Tehran talk on "The Past and Future of Persian Art"; his lushly enthusiastic style of writing, exemplified by the above quotation; and his international exhibitions and congresses, not the least of which were the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art and its associated Congress; as well as traveling exhibits of architectural photographs from his annual architectural surveys, all increased awareness and fostered interest in Persian art in general, and in Sasanian art to a degree not previously attained.

Further, his establishing the Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology and its subsequent transformations raised the profile of Persian art—and with it, Sasanian art. The Institute also provided succor for a number of European scholars, and although their respective, eventual departures contributed to the Institute's demise, these scholars created a new generation for the study of Persian art at the various institutions at which they taught.

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180 Pope 1965, 65.

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PART 4

*Curators, Collectors, and Art Dealers:
Pope and Islamic Persian Art*





FIGURE 9.1 *The Persian Palace, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893: "It was expected that the people of America would take a deep interest in the customs, manners, handicrafts, and people of Persia"*
 (AFTER *THE DREAM CITY: A PORTFOLIO OF PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS OF THE WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION* [ST. LOUIS, 1893]).

The Rise of Persian Art Connoisseurship: Arthur Upham Pope and Early Twentieth-Century Chicago

Yuka Kadoi

When I first met you . . . I was nobody, merely an advisory curator in Chicago—but you had already arrived as the great and coming figure in the art of the Near East, destined to take a position of unchallenged authority.¹

While much has been said about the achievements of Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) as one of the twentieth-century doyens of Persian art studies, it remains a matter of debate as to how he survived professionally and financially during a gap of some ten years in his career, namely between his departure from the university environment in the late 1910s and the establishment of his meteoric fame after the success of the London exhibition of Persian art in 1931.² This gap can be filled by various interim activities such as his involvement in the United States Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1926 where he acted as Special Commissioner for Persia.³ Yet one may wonder how anyone who had taught western philosophy and aesthetics could become a cultural attaché of Persia within five years. Mr. Pope—what happened to you?

This chapter considers the professional involvement of Arthur Upham Pope in the art society of Chicago in the late 1920s and early 1930s as advisory curator of Muhammadan Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, in order to understand his early career development as an Islamic Persian art expert, especially before his Philadelphia project. It aims at offering a fascinating insight into his visionary spirits and capabilities, intertwined with the distinctive cultural and civic ambitions of Chicago in the early twentieth century. The mid-1920s is indeed

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- 1 Letter from Pope to Kühnel, March 7, 1961, DAI/KA. For an abridged version of this chapter, see Kadoi 2010. Some contents of the present chapter are derived from various articles and conference papers I published or delivered for the past few years (in particular, Kadoi 2012; Kadoi 2013A).
 - 2 See London 1931. For the reconsideration of Pope's role in the 1931 exhibition, see Wood 2000.
 - 3 For further information about the subsequent Persian art exhibition at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, see Pope 1926A.

a key to the understanding of the emergence of connoisseurship in the art of Islamic Iran, and Pope is credited for founding the distinctive taste of what we now categorize broadly as Persian art.

Collecting 'Oriental' Art in Chicago 1893–1925

It is a well-known fact that Pope embarked on Oriental art business soon after he had left the university environment in the late 1910s due to the scandal caused by an involvement with his then student Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977). Although his real motivation remains unclear, it is generally thought that he developed his long-term personal interest in Oriental carpets,⁴ and he set up his business bases in New York in the east and California in the west in the early 1920s. Since the Oriental carpet was then still a relatively new subject to American audiences, let alone an independent scholarly branch of Islamic art, Pope foresaw the potential of a carpet enterprise and soon became a major player in the field as a consultant. With the aid of his eloquence in lectures and writings, Pope was energetically working for the evaluation of carpets as 'fine arts' and also as a scholarly discipline during the early period of his consultancy business.⁵ Some of his early writings on carpets reveal his preference for Persian products rather than rugs from other regions, indicating that Pope had already formed his pro-Persian hierarchical mindset.⁶ Pope's attempt to specialize in Persian carpets can also be seen as his business tactic, perhaps in a mode of rivalry with Armenian carpet dealers who were increasingly

4 Although it was probably not a decisive factor, his aunt's collections of carpets inspired the young Pope, when he visited her house during his study at Brown (*Surveyors*, 48). For one of the early carpet studies conducted by Pope, see San Francisco 1917, which was a collaborative work conducted by Pope, Rudolf Meyer-Riefstahl (1880–1936) and Phyllis Ackerman.

5 See Pope's essay in the San Francisco exhibition catalogue (San Francisco 1917, 67–155) and his series of essays, entitled "Oriental Rugs as Fine Art", that appeared in the art magazine called *International Studio* in 1922–3 (for bibliographical details, see *Surveyors*, 601). One of Pope's first attempts to study Oriental rugs as a scholarly discipline was his essay published in the *Art Bulletin* in 1925, with the overarching title "Research Methods in Muhammadan Art" (Pope 1925). For further discussion of his carpet career development in the early 1920s, see Kadoi 2012.

6 Pope's *International Studio* articles, for instance, begin with a detailed discussion of carpets that are neither from Anatolia nor from the Caucasus, but from Persia. This order—Persia first and then the rest—tells very clearly of Pope's aesthetical preference (Kadoi 2012, 8–9).

dominant in Oriental carpet dealing in the new world, especially in the field of Anatolian products.⁷

With a brief engagement in the cultural sector of San Francisco, Pope must have seen the potential of American museums, especially in the fin-de-siècle Midwest, which was in the process of establishing a cultural infrastructure supported by wealthy businessmen with a distinctive philanthropic spirit. Chicago, for instance, had long suffered from the psychological devastation in the aftermath of the Great Fire in 1871, but it regained its pride and in turn acquired its international recognition after the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.⁸ This fostered the growth of interest in other civilizations, and non-western art was brought into Chicago's cultural landscape. The Art Institute of Chicago (founded in 1879) quickly formed a collection of non-western 'fine arts' objects given by several legendary Chicago socialites of this time,⁹ and the growth of non-western collections brought by archaeologists and ethnographers to Chicago also stirred the formation of cultural and research institutions, such as the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago (founded in 1919) and the Field Museum of Natural History (founded in 1893).¹⁰ The Oriental mode is equally pronounced in some of the architectural marvels of early twentieth-century Chicago, such as the Medinah Temple (1913; now Bloomingdales) and the Bahai Temple (536 Sheridan Road, Wilmette; began to be constructed in 1920).¹¹

7 There was a long tradition for Armenian merchants to play an active role in the trans-Mediterranean trade, especially silk trade, mediating among Europe, Iran and Turkey (Helfgott 1994, 60–61). Many carpet dealers of Armenian origin fled from Ottoman Turkey during the persecutions that took place between 1890 and 1918 and eventually settled down in the United States. See Towner 1970, which captures the exclusive life of art dealers in late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century America and features Vitall [the Pasha] Benguiat (1859–1937), one of the powerful carpet dealers of this time. His obituary is found in the *New York Times*, March 18, 1937.

8 Chicago 1893. See also Çelik 1992, 80–88.

9 Pearlstein and Ulak 1993, 7–9.

10 Pope was unable to develop a good working relation with the Oriental Institute: this was due not only to the focus of this mighty institution that was given to ancient Near Eastern archaeology but also to the fact that James Breasted (1865–1935), the founder of the Oriental Institute, had a deep mistrust of Pope's activities. The Pope-Breasted relationship is mentioned throughout the current volume. Pope was, however, in a relatively good term with the Field Museum, thanks to his less intense relation with Berthold Laufer (1874–1934), a German-born Sinologist who was then Curator of Asian Anthropology at the Field Museum.

11 For the Medinah Temple, see Chicago 2001. For the Bahai Temple, see Wilmette 1942.

While the arts of East Asia were a focal point during the formative period of building the AIC's non-western collection, a number of objects from the Middle East, particularly medieval and post-medieval Persian ceramics, became an integral part of the collection as early as the 1900s. Many of such pieces were eventually deaccessioned or went missing, but a few of them survive until the present; a nineteenth-century copy of the Qur'an (1895.305) and a Safavid bowl (1900.14) were both associated with the Antiquarian Society.¹² Another Persian object that entered the collection during this time is a large Safavid blue-and-white plate (1900.1365) from Samuel M. Nickerson (1830–1914), one of the leading collectors of this time.¹³ The next major acquisition was from other important local collectors, such as Frank W. Gunsaulus (1856–1921), who donated some fifty Persian ceramics from the Seljuk to Safavid periods to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1913–19.¹⁴ Although such collectors primarily focused on East Asian art, they may have found certain comparable elements in the ceramics of the eastern and western fringes of Eurasia, given the impact of Chinese art traditions on the technical and stylistic development of Middle Eastern ceramics. The establishment of the Department of Oriental Art (now the Department of Asian Art) at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1922 encouraged further activities for a better understanding of non-western cultures.¹⁵ Although the primary departmental interest was consistently given to East Asian art, the arts of the Middle East received a certain recognition as an integral part of non-western visual cultures.

12 The Antiquarian Society (formerly the Chicago Society of Decorative Art) is the core of the foundation of the Art Institute of Chicago. Established in 1877, it offered a number of important gifts to the Institute during its formative period and continues to act as one of the most important supporting groups. For further information, see Hillard 2002.

13 For this plate, see Kadoi 2011, fig. 1. This piece, ambiguously classified in a group of Chinese porcelains as a 'Persian plaque' in the exhibition of the Nickerson collection in 1900 (Chicago 1900, 87, no. 22). Nickerson, a successful business entrepreneur and civil leader of Chicago, was one of the founding trustees of the Art Institute. His magnificent mansion (40 East Erie Street, Chicago) is now open to the public as the Driehaus Museum.

14 This collection has been mentioned in Riefstahl 1922, xv and ix. In my article in 2010 (Kadoi 2010, 65), I attribute the Persian ceramic collection vaguely to the Gunsaulus family; however, it seems to be the case that Frank W. Gunsaulus donated his own collection of Persian ceramics to the Institute but named it in commemoration of his mother, Mary Jane Gunsaulus, thus now known under her name (see Anon 1921, 138). It remains unclear from which dealers Gunsaulus acquired Persian pottery, due to the unavailability of archival materials at the Art Institute of Chicago, where has kept acquisitions and loan records from 1922 onward.

15 For the history of the Department, see Pearlstein and Ulak 1993, 7–9.

Following a collecting tradition of non-western art in the Euro-American world, the pottery of the Middle East was in the beginning the focal point of 'Muhammadan' (an early term for Islamic) art collections in Chicago: "Mohammedan pottery is an achievement as high as any in the history of ceramics. The basis of this marvellous beauty, of course, is color."¹⁶ The Orientals (now the Asian Art Council),¹⁷ a supporting group affiliated to the Art Institute of Chicago, for instance, presented some of the first gifts to the Department of Oriental Art, including a fine white bowl of China (1925.755) and a type of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iranian incised earthenware (1925.754), previously known as 'Gabri' (now termed as Garrus);¹⁸ the latter is described in the *Art News* as "... is one of the very few bowls of this period in existence that is still intact."¹⁹

Such pieces seem to have initially been acquired through the World's Columbian Exposition, since this event was associated with a number of Islamic art dealers of this time, including Dikran Garabed Kelekian (1868–1951), who acted as commissioner for the Persian Pavilion (fig. 9.1),²⁰ and Ephraim Benguitat, who was involved in the display of carpets at the Turkish Pavilion.²¹ This stimulated subsequent Islamic art sales and exhibitions across the city, including the carpet collection of Louis Sullivan (1856–1924), one of the key cultural advocates of the time in Chicago, which was eventually sold at an auction together with his non-western art collections.²² While most dealers had their business base mainly in New York, Chicago gradually established its own dealers' network, as reflected, for instance, in some Persian art sales

16 AIC Newsletter, February 17, 1923.

17 Elinor Pearlstein is currently working on the history of the Asian Art Council.

18 According to Lane (Arthur Lane, 1909–63), "those genial rogues the Persian dealers have saddled these wares with the nonsense name 'gabri', which means 'fire worshipper' and has nothing to do with pottery; it may be in place to add that 20th-century 'gabri' wares have proved extremely popular with collectors and museums, several of which appear in Sambon (Arthur Sambon: "Les Faïences Ivoirines de Sendjan de la Dynastie Bouïde", *Le Musée*, December 1925, 113–22). Human figures are always suspect; some harmless, genuine, plain white bowls have been subsequently recut with more interesting designs . . .," quoted in Watson 2004, 260.

19 The *Art News*, December 12, 1925. This bowl appears to be a fake.

20 See Jenkins-Madina 2000, 73. For Kelekian, see Simpson 2000. His obituary was published in the *New York Times* (January 31, 1951).

21 Towner 1970, 168; Helfgott 1994, 104. As mentioned in note 7, his brother, Vitall Benguitat, who jointly run the firm with Ephraim, became one of the legends in Oriental carpet dealing.

22 Chicago 1909, nos. 75–90.

held in Chicago in the late 1910s and 1920s.²³ Among the most notable Islamic art events of early twentieth-century Chicago was the exhibition of Oriental carpets from the James F. Ballard (1851–1931) Collection in St. Louis which was organized by the Marshall Field & Company (founded in 1852; now Macy's) in 1916 as a home furnishing show.²⁴ The Ballard collection of Oriental carpets was also exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1922.²⁵ Judging by the above-mentioned exhibitions, the opulent potential of Muhammadan art in general and Oriental carpets in particular must have been reasonably understood by Chicago's affluent, art-conscious clients by the 1920s, as commercial and displayable items.

1924: A Vision of the Asiatic Museum

As far as the surviving records are concerned, Pope was already known as an expert of Muhammedan art in the Chicago art community as early as 1924, for instance having given a lecture on “fundamental principals of Muhammedan art” and having been known through his research into “Muhammedan influence on Gothic and early Renaissance art.”²⁶ The latter subject not only mirrors Pope's long-term interest in the relationship between Persian and Gothic architecture, a subject which continued to bother his mind for a long time.²⁷ It also reflects the collecting fashion of the time, since some Islamic objects came as representations of medieval European taste.

Although his official debut is often considered to have taken place in the year of 1925, Pope had already been in close contact with a number of scholars and curators of Islamic and broadly non-western art histories in the Euro-American world a few years before. One of the noteworthy episodes in the previous year of 1924 was his involvement in the discourse of the so-called ‘Asiatic Museum.’ This rather utopian idea came to Pope's mind, as he was increasingly aware of the necessity for an international institution for

23 Chicago 1919. Khan Monif also organized a Persian exhibition at the Arts Club of Chicago in 1927 (*Rare Persian Antiquities from the Collection of Mr. H. Khan Monif*, 4–18 January).

24 Chicago 1916. The City Art Museum of Saint Louis (now the Saint Louis Art Museum) received Ballard's gifts of sixty-nine Oriental rugs in 1929; many of other rugs from his collection, which had been passed onto his daughter after his death, were given to the museum in 1972. See Walker 1988.

25 Chicago 1922.

26 AIC Newsletter, November 15, 1924.

27 See Kadoi 2016 for further discussion on Pope and his Persian-Gothic thesis.

promoting a better understanding of non-western culture and envisioned the establishment of a museum dedicated to the cultural legacy of Asia, including Muslim culture. Pope exchanged ideas about the 'Asiatic Museum' with colleagues in Europe, especially with Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929), the then general director of what is now the Berlin State Museums, who became involved in the reorganization of the museum structure in Berlin, including the foundation of a new institution dedicated to Asian art in Dahlem.²⁸ Pope, who was on friendly terms with German Islamic art historians of the time, writes passionately to Bode:

It is all the more tragic and deplorable that this museum [Asiatic Museum in Berlin] should be delayed now because of the situation in Germany. As Germany loses in political power, she must all the more strive for intellectual and cultural power. . . . Art and culture of Asia is going to be the next great factor in the culture of the west. It was a wonderful vision of you to see it first. Other Asiatic museums are going to be built all over the world and Germany should not easily relinquish the honor of having the first.²⁹

Pope also comments on the Freer Gallery of Art, one of the finest Asian art museums in the United States:

In the Freer Collection we have in America something like an Asiatic Museum but despite the beauty of the museum and the great importance of many of the exhibits, the collection is too private and personal to be of universal importance. It includes Whistler and other miscellaneous examples of non-Asiatic art that destroyed the unity of effect.³⁰

Finally, Pope states the importance of Muhammadan art in the museum display:

Will you also express your opinion on the importance of Muhammedan art in a general museum. I shall be savagely attacked on just that point particularly by people who know nothing about the subject. We believe that Muhammedan art is one of the most vital and significant expressions of the aesthetic spirit and that despite its relative neglect it is a phase of

28 See Severin 1991; Brisch 1996. Pope was initially acquainted with Bode most probably through carpets.

29 Letter from Pope to Bode, 23 October 1923, ZA/SMB.

30 Letter from Pope to Bode, 23 October 1923, ZA/SMB.

art so important that no museum can afford to be without adequate representations of it and the museum that waits too long will find nothing to buy except at tremendous prices. If you believe that and would say so, that would be one more weapon in our armory.³¹

Pope came to understand the difficulties in the foundation of a sound 'Asiatic Museum' in the old world, which involved a long-standing idea about museum departmental structure. In one of his essays published in 1924, entitled "The Problem of the Asiatic Museum in Berlin", Pope reports various issues surrounding the concept of the Asiatic Museum in Berlin, situated in Dahlem, particularly the detachment of Islamic art from Asian art:

Dr. Becker [Carl Heinrich Becker; 1876–1933; then worked with the Prussian Minister of Culture] maintained that Mohammadan art and culture not an integral part of the Asiatic culture but rather an essential part of the European system; that Mohammadan culture was chiefly determined by Hellenic civilization which in turn preserved and to a considerable extent reintroduced into Europe later. These two cultures, the European and the Mohammadan, presuppose one another, they are within the same historical circle in continuous interaction, and in order to be properly understood, specimens of these cultures must be exhibited together.³²

Although his idealized 'Asiatic Museum' was not established in the end, Pope could have been one of the first curators or the first museum directors of Asian art that initiated the presentation of Asian civilization without geographical borders.

1925: Becoming the Berenson of Persian Art

1925 became a defining year in Pope's career. The growing idea for the enhancement of a Middle Eastern collection at the Art Institute of Chicago culminated in the formation of a special fund which was jointly established by Frank G.

31 Letter from Pope to Bode, 23 October 1923, ZA/SMB.

32 Pope 1924A, 68. See also Pope 1924B. This quotation confirms that the idea of Muhammadan art as a European heritage was deeply rooted in the cultural psych of the nineteenth century, and this particular art historical stance remained influential in the early twentieth century.

Logan (1851–1937), Henry J. Patten (1862–1938), and Martin A. Ryerson (1856–1932), three of the AIC's founding trustees and board members. This fund, intended to build up a reasonable scale of the collection of Muhammadan art, was set up at a committee meeting in February 1925, and Pope, then in his mid-forties, was appointed as Advisory Curator of Muhammadan Art.³³ Although unpaid and untenured, this was one of the earliest appointments of Islamic art curatorship in American museums.³⁴

Surviving archival materials of the Art Institute of Chicago do not help to track down the exact relationship between the establishment of this fund and Pope's appointment. The fund was most probably part of the institutional transformation soon after the death of the museum president Charles L. Hutchinson (1868–1934), from a depository of various gifts from donors into an art museum with permanent collections of chronological and geographical coherence.³⁵ It is also likely that the inclusion of the arts of Islam in the permanent display of Asian art was inspired by the growth of Islamic art collections and exhibitions in other parts of the United States and Europe, such as the Munich exhibition of Muhammadan art in 1910.³⁶

With the financial support provided by the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as the collaboration of Charles F. Kelley (1885–1960; Curator of Oriental Art from 1923 to 1956),³⁷ Pope began to be fully involved in the acquisition process of Islamic artworks soon after his appointment in early 1925. Despite his inseparable visual tie with Persian art, the pieces the Art Institute of Chicago received during this year are predominantly those from Egypt and acquired in Cairo, apart from a modest amount of Persian tileworks given to the museum by Pope as gifts. This indicates that Cairo was one of the important art market centres in the Middle East, before Iran opened its gate to the West.

33 Minutes, February 18, 1925, Board of Trustees Records, Art Institute of Chicago Archives. Thus Rizvi's remark on the year (1919) as Pope's Chicago appointment proves to be incorrect (Rizvi 2007, 47).

34 Mehmet Ağa-Oğlu (1896–1946) was, however, the first paid curator of Islamic art in American museums. He came to the United States from Turkey in 1929 to accept an offer of the curatorial position from the Detroit Institute of Art, became the first chair of Islamic art the University of Michigan in 1933. *Ars Islamica* was launched in 1934 under his editorship. For further information on his life and career, see Simavi 2012.

35 Hillard 2010, 79–84.

36 See Lermer and Shalem 2010. The Munich exhibition was mentioned in the Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago, 18/8 (1924), 103.

37 Kelley kept a diary (1925–59), mentioning his meetings with Pope from 1925 up to around 1940. I am most grateful to Elinor Pearlstein for drawing my attention to Kelley's diary.

It was in April 1925 that Pope first went to Iran to give a lecture on Persian art, entitled “The Past and Future of Persian Art.”³⁸ His eloquence was met with enthusiasm, and the result was the establishment of a strong link with the Pahlavi monarchy. This journey was also intended for “the purpose of studying Mohammadan art treasures in this country,”³⁹ or, in other words, for selecting objects not only for the AIC but probably also for other private collectors and public museums for acquisition consideration. Patten, one of the co-funding AIC trustee’s members, joined Pope’s voyage to the Middle East.⁴⁰

While abundant Persian objects awaited Pope and Patten, they faced a great deal of difficulty, especially logistic challenges. It appears that some objects were transported through the American diplomatic channel, and Wallace Smith Murray (1887–1965), who was then US Chargé d’Affaires, reports:

I have the honor to transmit two objects [a book cover and a piece of brocade] which were left by Mr. Pope at this Legation with the request that they be transmitted to the United States through the official pouch of this Legation. I am informed that these objects were purchased for certain museums in the United States and presume that the Department may desire first to communicate with Mr. Pope as to their final disposition before deciding as whether they may be, under the circumstances, admitted duty free.⁴¹

The shipment of the objects was seriously delayed, due to the confusion caused by the lack of an official export permit, and Pope’s cases, including personal items for Patten and himself, were held up at Kermanshah for fourteen months.⁴²

Despite logistic difficulties, Pope’s first visit to Iran culminated in the influx of Persian art objects to the Art Institute of Chicago and other western museums. The objects brought into the AIC clearly reflect Pope’s vision of how the arts of Islamic Persia should look like. With the emphasis of great medieval and post-medieval dynasties of Persia, such as the Seljuks and the Safavids, some 300 pieces of representative Persian art—for example, architectural

38 For this lecture, see *Surveyors*, 93–110. This lecture is published as Pope 1976.

39 Majd 2003, 29.

40 See the caption of the photography reproduced in *Surveyors*, 87, says: “Henry J. Patten and Pope, Damascus, March 1925, embarking on their cross-desert drive to Iran.” See also the letters from Patten to Pope regarding the cost of this journey (*Surveyors*, 111).

41 Letter from Murray, June 10, 1925 (quoted in Majd 2003, 31, note 5).

42 Majd 2003, 33.

tiles, some of which are from certain monuments, a wide range of ceramics of varied shapes, a number of textile fragments—were flooded into the Art Institute of Chicago within the decade.⁴³ The selection of Islamic Persian artworks at the Art Institute of Chicago was due to a myriad of factors, ranging from Pope's personal preference to their availability in the market, combined with the financial decisions made by the Institute. Many artworks that arrived at the AIC through Pope mirror his appreciation of traditional Persian architecture and craftsmanship, whereas some art media, such as manuscript painting and calligraphy, were a less integral part of the collection during its formative period. This was mainly owing to Pope's unfamiliarity with Oriental languages,⁴⁴ as well as because most major libraries in Europe had already established Oriental manuscript collections by the mid-1920s.⁴⁵ Another missing medium was the carpet: none of the Persian rugs were brought to the Art Institute of Chicago under his recommendation, although Pope continued to advise private collectors and other institutions for the acquisition of Oriental rugs.⁴⁶ His small contribution to the shaping of post-Safavid art collections did certainly fit in with the pattern of the development of scholarship and connoisseurship in the Persian art of the Islamic period in the West, for the arts of modern Iran—namely Qajar (1781–1925) art—tended to be considered too western, losing the essence of 'Persian' art traditions and were thus for a long time overshadowed.⁴⁷ One could also possibly argue that Pope's aesthetics laid a foundation for this pre-modern taste. According to Pope, "for more than two centuries now art has steadily declined in Persia."⁴⁸

The year of 1925 also became a turning point for Pope who appears to have determined to form his image as a tastemaker of Persian art. This was not only thanks to his visit to Persia but also owing to his inspirational meeting with

43 Some of the ceramics Pope brought to the AIC have been published in Gunsaulus 1936.

44 Pope kept a certain distance with the study of Persian manuscript painting and calligraphy. In the chapter of the art of the book in his *Introduction to Persian Art* (1930), he states in the beginning: "This is not the place to expound the history of painting or of book-making in Persia. Such a discussion is not needed in an introduction because of the excellent available treatises on the subject" (Pope 1930, 99).

45 France, for instance, was a leading center of Oriental manuscript collections and studies in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Hillenbrand 2010B).

46 See the following section on Pope's activities in 1926.

47 Qajar art began to be incorporated into the art-historical narrative of the Islamic world only in the past two decades (for a historiographical overview of Qajar art scholarship, see Flood 2007, 35–38).

48 Pope 1930, 245.

Bernard Berenson (1865–1959; fig. 9.2) at the Villa I Tatti on the outskirts of Florence. According to Rexford Stead:

Arthur was, no doubt about it, the Berenson of Persia. 1925 was important not only because of that first trip and Reza Shah, but because of his pilgrimage to I Tatti. I almost imagine Arthur, listening to Berenson, deciding “that’s the life I want.”⁴⁹

Pope’s admiration for the legendary life style of Berenson is self-evident from their exchange of correspondence during the summer of 1925:

My dear Mr. Berenson, it would be hard to tell you what a memorable and delightful time we had in those two days spent at your villa and the all too few hours we had of your company. They were harrowing hours as well as satisfying, for if the truth be told the sound of your voice and the sight of your library stirred the unsleeping pang of insufficient knowledge to new virulence...⁵⁰

Berenson’s interest in Oriental culture had already begun in his college time, when he read Oriental languages, including Arabic, at Harvard.⁵¹ Having encountered “the marvellous Muslim, chiefly Persian things” at the time of his visit to the 1910 Munich exhibition,⁵² he amassed, albeit a short period between 1910 and 1913, a small yet selective collection of Persian art, now housed in the Villa I Tatti in Florence.⁵³ Berenson was one of the collectors who foresaw the

49 Letter from Stead to Payne, August 13, 1982 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 90). Robert Payne states: “... scholarship and art dealing were closely intertwined. Like Bernard Berenson, whom he resembled in his wide-ranging knowledge and extraordinary charm, Arthur found himself walking through minefields... as an art dealer he must also be an authenticator, a judge rendering his verdict on a work of art. Like Berenson he made mistakes” (*Surveyors*, 75).

50 Letter from Pope to Berenson, August 3, 1925, Berenson Papers, Biblioteca Berenson, Villa I Tatti–Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence.

51 Casari 2014, 175.

52 “I have been here some days studying the marvellous Muslim, chiefly Persian things here. There never was such a thing, and there scarcely will be again in my lifetime”, letter from Berenson to Isabella Stewart Gardner, August 29, 1910 (quoted in Casari 2014, 186–7).

53 His Islamic art collection was scaled down, owing to reselling, and the collection currently consists of three Persian manuscripts, a fragmentary copy of the Qur’an, two Arabic and four Persian detached illustrations, two Kashan ceramics, a Persian silver cup, a Mamluk brass bowl, and carpets (Casari 2014, 188).



FIGURE 9.2 *Bernard Berenson, ca. 1903. Photographed by Sarah Choate Sears. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Montgomery S. Bradley and Cameron Bradley, P1984.58*

(PHOTOGRAPH: IMAGING DEPARTMENT ©
PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE).

value of Persian manuscript painting in the art market before the outbreak of the First World War and collaborated with some of the famous dealers of this time, including Georges J. Demotte (1877–1923).⁵⁴ According to Berenson, “just now it is Persian miniatures one should go in for, because the market will soon be exhausted.”⁵⁵ Moreover, Berenson appreciated Persian manuscript painting in parallel with Renaissance art. His connoisseurial emphasis was therefore

54 For his Persian painting collection, see Ettinghausen 1961; Bailey 2001; Bailey 2002. For Demotte, see the following discussion of the 1926 carpet exhibition.

55 Letter from Berenson to Isabella Stewart Gardner, Oxford, August 12, 1910 (quoted in Casari 2014, n. 48).

given to the late fifteenth-early sixteenth centuries as well as to the role of individual artists and patrons: Bihzad was viewed as the Persian Michelangelo, while the Tumrid princes patronized art as the Oriental Medicis.⁵⁶

Pope may have initially come to know the name of Berenson as a Renaissance art connoisseur through his research into western aesthetics rather than as an Islamic art collector. Although they are unlikely to have exchanged their thoughts on non-western art in the early 1910s, when Pope had not yet embarked on his Oriental art consultancy business, Berenson's high opinion of 'Persian things' provides an intriguing parallel with Pope's preference for anything 'Persian' than non-Persian. It was probably in the early 1920s that Pope and Berenson established their personal contacts, perhaps through their mutually known dealers and colleagues.⁵⁷ While it remains unclear whether he was a welcome guest at I Tatti,⁵⁸ Pope was a frequent visitor to Florence, an important Oriental carpet depository in Europe at that time. Once the European capital of art, Florence faced many sociocultural challenges in modern times but was in the process of recapturing the glory of Italian Renaissance, ironically, in the form of selling and restoring Renaissance works of art by dealers and restorers, such as Stefano Bardini (1836–1922), who also possessed and sold carpets to several collectors, including Bode.⁵⁹ While the exact working relationship between Pope and Berenson in terms of Persian art connoisseurship after the meeting in 1925 is uncertain, Berenson supported Pope's Persian enterprise and acted as a patron, for instance making several financial contributions to Pope's Institute and serving as a sponsor of the 4th Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in New York in 1960. The latter became the last public act of Berenson before he died in 1959.⁶⁰

1926: Displaying Carpets in Chicago

Pope experienced another phase of his career development in Chicago in the year of 1926. The Art Institute of Chicago continued to acquire various Islamic

56 See Soucek 2001; Casari 2014, 189–93.

57 Although he did not actively collect Islamic art after 1913, Berenson remained curious about the cultural heritage of the Islamic world. Besides his association with Sarre, Meyer-Riefstahl, and Ağâ-Oğlu, Creswell was instrumental in the introduction of Islamic architecture to Berenson, who visited Egypt in 1921–2 (Casari 2014, 180).

58 "...I am aware that B. B. did not like Pope, but that he was impressed by *A Survey of Persian Art*, one of AUP's really monumental efforts", letter from Stead to Craig Smythe, Director of the Villa I Tatti, August 2, 1980, AOA (*Surveyors*, 90).

59 See Chini 2009 for the relationship between Bardini and Bode.

60 *Surveyors*, 92 and 419.

pieces through Pope's Persian art network, and the objects that entered the AIC collection during this year included not only typical Persian items of Islamic period but also some non-Persian Islamic pieces, for instance some sixty-six pieces from the Samarra finds. This important group of archaeological finds—originally yielded from the German excavations at Samarra by Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) in 1911–3 but sent to the British Museum in London in 1921 due to the British occupation of Iraq in the First World War—came to Chicago as part of the British Museum's initiative to distribute so-called 'type-sets' of the finds among North American museums with departments of Islamic art.⁶¹ The principal agent of the transfer of the Samarra finds from London to Chicago was Robert Lockhard Hobson (1872–1941), who was then the Keeper at the Department of Ceramics and Ethnography in the British Museum, with expertise in Chinese ceramics.⁶² Although the finds themselves were received as study materials rather than displayable fine items, this episode demonstrates Pope's international, cross-disciplinary network, ranging from Chinese ceramics to Islamic archaeology. It is also important to note that in early 1926 Pope attempted to acquire a set of photographs of Islamic architecture from Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell (1879–1974)—the doyen of Islamic architectural studies who left a valuable corpus of early Muslim architecture in the Arab world—for the library of the Art Institute of Chicago.⁶³

Perhaps more than his curatorial role at the AIC, Pope firmly established his local fame, thanks to his pivotal role in the organization of *A Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets* at the Art Club of Chicago (founded in 1916) in the winter of 1926.⁶⁴ Although modest in scale, the 1926 Chicago carpet show became

61 For further discussion, see Kadoi 2014. The Pope-Herzfeld relationship, a topic which is mentioned throughout the current volume, was not tensional in 1926. Initially teamed up against the French monopoly, Herzfeld developed a considerable animosity to Pope; their relationship became deteriorated around 1929. See Kröger 2005, 68.

62 Hobson was one of the connoisseur-type art historians of non-western ceramics rather than a scholar with a solid archaeological training. He was interested in the Samarra finds, especially their relation with Chinese ceramics. For Hobson, see Gray 1942.

63 Correspondence regarding the Creswell photographs between Pope and the Art Institute of Chicago is found in the Arthur Upham Pope Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library (hereafter, NYPL/AUP). The acquisition of the Creswell photographs in Chicago did not materialize in the end.

64 ACC is one of the leading private art clubs in North America. Incorporated in 1916, the Club intended to encourage, foster and develop higher standards of art; to promote the mutual acquaintance of art lovers and art workers; to maintain in the City of Chicago a club house and to provide therein galleries and exhibition facilities in support of the foregoing purposes (Chicago 1966, 3). Since its earlier times, it has played a pioneering role in the promotion of modern and contemporary art exhibitions and events in Chicago

a turning point in the display of Persian carpets in North America and successfully set a career passage for Pope.⁶⁵

The exhibition gathered fifty-five carpets from a wide geographical area of the Islamic world, including twenty-nine carpets ascribed to Persia according to the attributions found in the catalogue.⁶⁶ The exhibits came from not only North American collections but also several European countries, such as England, Germany, Switzerland, and France. More intriguingly, it involved a number of loans from well-known Oriental carpet collectors and Islamic art dealers of the early twentieth century, demonstrating Pope's awesome networking skills.

Two of the leading North American collectors of Oriental rugs of the time—Ballard and Edith Rockefeller McCormick (1872–1932)—acted as a patron of the show. While the former lent one Turkish rug (no. 42), the latter provided two Persian carpets (nos. 13 and 16).⁶⁷

One of the star pieces was a portion of the Ardabil carpet (no. 6) now in the collection of Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Gift of J. Paul Getty, 53.50.2). Although the most influential display of the Ardabil carpet tends to be considered as the 1931 London Persian art exhibition,⁶⁸ it was already in Chicago that the carpet caught the fancy of exclusive collectors in an intimate display atmosphere. Lent by the Duveen Brothers, which was owned by Joseph Duveen (1869–1939; fig. 9.3),⁶⁹ one of the most influential art dealers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the carpet received high admiration from Chicago audiences. There was even an idea to acquire it for the Art Institute of Chicago, yet in the end this did not materialize due to the absence of major

but also hosted several shows of non-western art. A complete list of the exhibitions held at the Arts Club of Chicago is available online: <http://www.newberry.org/collections/FindingAids/artsclub/ArtsClub.html> (accessed May 5, 2011). The Newberry Library holds a comprehensive record of the ACC exhibitions, including the 1926 carpet exhibition (hereafter, NL/ACC).

65 The following discussion on the Chicago carpet exhibition is partially based on Kadoi 2013A, 262–9.

66 Pope 1926B. See below for further discussion of the catalogue of the 1926 Chicago carpet show.

67 These numbers are according to the Chicago carpet show catalogue (Pope 1926B).

68 This carpet was exhibited at the London Persian Art exhibition in 1931 (London 1931, no. 856) and was later purchased by J. Paul Getty (1892–1976). For further provenance research into the Ardabil carpet, see Erdmann 1970, 29–32.

69 For further information about the life and career of Joseph Duveen, see Secrest 2004.

donors, and the carpet remained unsold.⁷⁰ Its price was indeed astronomically set: Duveen's suggested price of the carpets he lent to the Arts Club was generally higher than others, for example \$75,000 (equivalent today to approximately \$900,000) for the Ardabil piece,⁷¹ \$25,000 for the Isfahan red-ground rug (no. 15) and \$30,000 for the Polonaise rug (no. 25). Duveen performed as a bold, charismatic art dealer in this exhibition; he, for instance, states in a sly letter to Pope: "... I very much dislike to appear to create an atmosphere suggesting that they are necessarily for sale. My main idea in loaning them is for the benefit of the Museum and the art loving public."⁷² Clearly, Pope's carpet showmanship manifested itself in his earlier involvement in the presentation of this iconic rug in Chicago and continued to offer a source of theatrical inspiration until around 1960—one may think of George Balanchine (1904–83)'s 'lost' ballet "The Figure in the Carpet"—even though his overall influence on Persian art scholarship and connoisseurship sharply diminished in the 1940s and 1950s.⁷³

George Hewitt Myers (1875–1957) was a major buyer in the exhibition.⁷⁴ Myers, who had already established a love-hate business relationship with Pope by this time, was bewitched by Pope's persuasiveness:

Ballard was here [at the rug show in Chicago]. He was really quite astonished at what he saw. He stayed three hours and left quite lip-up. He said,

70 "... they are going to try to get it for the Art Institute, but they cannot do anything for about three or four months until the most likely donor, who heads the subscription, gets back ...", letter from Pope to Myers, January 19, 1926, NL/ACC.

71 It is interesting to note that the V&A Ardabil carpet was purchased at £2,500 in 1892 (Helfgott 1994, 87).

72 Letter from Duveen to Pope, January 14, 1926, NL/ACC.

73 For this ballet, see Klass 1986; Kodat 2014, 71–124. The ballet, based on the aesthetics of Persian carpet art, was first presented by the New York City Ballet in 1960, originally an event attached to the Forth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in New York. According to Lincoln Kirstein (1907–96), "Dr. Pope showed us an extraordinary construct laid out on a big table. At first sight it appeared to be a scrupulously rendered reduction of the interlace of a famous Ardabil rug. However, it was not painted on a single surface, but rather on half a dozen transparent plastic sheets ... The diagrammatic carpet which Dr. Pope demonstrated to our designer, Esteban Frances, was transformed into dances framed as a Franco-Persian court fete. They suggested the age in which the arabesque of Islamic ornament wove itself into Western European fashion and design, just as the *arabesque*, our ballet position, fixed the place of Islam in a royal academy of dancing at Versailles" (*Surveyors*, 422–3). I am most grateful to Catherine Kodat for fruitful discussion on the 'lost' ballet, Balanchine, Pope and the carpet.

74 For the relationship between Pope and Myers, see Krody's chapter in the present volume.



FIGURE 9.3 *Sir Joseph Duveen, art authority, wife & daughter Dorothy, ca. 1910–20. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.*

“when you write George Myers, tell him that if I were his age, and had health as good as his, I should buy at least half of the collection.”⁷⁵

Although not half of the exhibits, Myers ultimately bought nine carpets, spending in total \$65,000.⁷⁶ This includes the Safavid silk kilim (no. 27; R33.28.1, Textile Museum, Washington, DC), which was later used as the design for his book-plate, demonstrating his fondness of this piece.⁷⁷ Another carpet purchased by him is the medallion carpet (no. 2; R33.1.2, Textile Museum, Washington, DC), currently attributed to early seventeenth-century Isfahan.⁷⁸ Both carpets were lent by the Bernheimer Brothers in Munich, a renewed art

⁷⁵ Letter from Pope to Myers, January 19, 1926, NL/ACC.

⁷⁶ Namely, nos. 2, 17, 27, 33, 35, 36, 39, 41, and 53.

⁷⁷ Pope 1926B, no. 27; Bier 1987, no. 40; Kadoi 2010, fig. 3. I am grateful to Daniel Shaffer for this information.

⁷⁸ Pope 1926B, no. 2; Bier 1987, no. 47.

dealer which is still active in the art market sphere;⁷⁹ the firm lent in total nine carpets to the exhibition.⁸⁰

Four carpets were lent by Dikran Garabed Kelekian. He offered one medallion and animal carpet, two floral carpets attributed to Isfahan and the so-called vase carpet.⁸¹ Besides these Persian pieces, "Papa" Kelekian also brought one Turkish rug in the Chicago show. His Holbein carpet (no. 39) was sold at \$11,000,⁸² pleasing him: "your client will make a very wise purchase, if he secures this rug, which is the finest example of its kind. In all my forty-one years experience I have never seen so fine a specimen."⁸³

Another dealer who got involved in this exhibition was Demotte, which was founded by Georges J. Demotte, perhaps the most infamous dealer in the history of Islamic art collecting, owing to his cannibalistic act of splitting the pages of the Great Mongol *Shahnama*.⁸⁴ Compared with the above-mentioned dealers, however, Demotte played a low-profile role in the Chicago carpet show, lending only one Persian rug and four non-Persian pieces.⁸⁵ Other exhibitors included B. Altman & Co., New York,⁸⁶ E. Beghian, London,⁸⁷ and the Bachstitz Gallery of the Hague, New York.⁸⁸

Among the two notable firms, M. and R. Stora in Paris, which was run by Raphaël Stora (1887–1963) in partnership with his brother Maurice (1879–

79 Founded in 1864 by Lehmann Bernheimer (1841–1918), the firm opened as a shop for textiles and Oriental carpets and later expanded its business into other objects of arts and European painting. Now known as the Bernheimer Fine Old Masters, it mainly deals with European paintings of the sixteenth-nineteenth centuries (for further information about this firm, see Pfeiffer-Belli 1964; for its relations with Oriental carpets, see London 1996). Some correspondences from/to Bernheimer to/from the ACC or Pope are now in Box 3, Folder 66, NL/ACC.

80 Nos. 2, 9, 17, 21, 27, 31, 40 and 49–50. No. 21 appeared in the Bernheimer sales at Christie's in 1996 (London 1996, no. 150).

81 Nos. 3, 10, 14 and 19.

82 Telegram from Pope to Kelekian, January 18, 1926, NL/ACC.

83 Letter from Kelekian to Pope, January 18, 1926, NL/ACC.

84 For his life, see Nielsen 2008, 169–70. During the time of the Chicago show, Lucien Demotte (d. 1934) succeeded his father's firm after Georges's death in 1923.

85 Nos. 12, 33 and 52–54.

86 Some correspondences from/to Altman to/from the ACC or Pope are now in Box 3, Folder 62, NL/ACC.

87 Some correspondences from/to Beghian to/from the ACC or Pope are now in Box 3, Folder 65, NL/ACC.

88 Some correspondences from/to Bachstitz to/from the ACC or Pope are now in Box 3, Folder 63, NL/ACC.

1950), was in a close working relation with Pope.⁸⁹ Stora presented a number of Persian objects to collectors, institutions and exhibitions through Pope on various occasions, including one of the monumental Saljuq stucco panels that has entered the collection of the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha.⁹⁰ Parish-Watson, which was known for its Islamic ceramic dealing, also sent three Persian carpets (nos. 1, 8 and 26) to the show.⁹¹

Although primarily a sale, the show gave visitors a greater understanding of the extraordinary beauty and craftsmanship of Oriental carpets. Many types of the carpets exhibited in the Chicago show eventually laid the foundation for defining the 'classical' style and design in this genre of Persian art.⁹² The show also intended to recontextualize, once again, the carpet as a subject of the fine arts, a topic which was explored in Pope's opening lecture on January 12, 1926, entitled "Early Oriental Rugs as Fine Art."⁹³

The exhibition received rapturous acclaim. One of the *Chicago Tribune's* reviews of the show says, "connoisseurs have come great distances to see the remarkable exhibit [...] which is the finest that has been shown in the United

89 For the Stora firm, see Nielsen 2008, 177. Some correspondences from/to Stora to/from the ACC or Pope are now in Box 3, Folder 80, NL/ACC. According to Charles Breasted (the son of James Breasted), "...Stora is a firm which has been offering for sale quantities of Luristan bronzes and other Persian antiquities. I might add that Pope has been in closest touch with them and undoubtedly furnishes them with much of this stuff, from the sale of which he derives his usual modest 'cut!'" (letter from Breasted to Herzfeld, November 13, 1932, 01).

90 This panel (see the cover image of the current volume) was exhibited at the 1931 London show (London 1931, no. 37) and published in *A Survey* (SPA, pl. 516). It was sold at Christie's London in 2010 (Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds, October 5, 2010, lot 99; Hillenbrand 2010A). The other two related panels are in the Pennsylvania Museum of Art and formerly in the Museum of Fine Art in Boston (the latter is discussed in Weinstein's chapter in the current volume).

91 For its Islamic ceramic holding, see Meyer-Riefstahl 1922. The shop was located in 44 East 57th Street, New York. A large dark blue jar attributed to twelfth-century Kashan from the ex-Parish-Watson collection (Meyer-Riefstahl 1922, no. 40; SPA, pl. 770; London 1931, no. 117L) has been sold at Sotheby's London in 2010 (Arts of the Islamic World, April 14, lot 142) at £361,250. This piece also ended up with the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha.

92 It is interesting to compare the idea of the 'classical' style of Persian carpets and the notion of the 'classical' style (i.e. Timurid and Safavid paintings) that evolved in the scholarship and connoisseurship of Persian painting during the twentieth century (see Gruber 2012 for a recent study of the term 'classical' in Persian painting).

93 See Box 3, Folder 61, NL/ACC. As mentioned, this topic was already explored by Pope before the 1926 Chicago carpet show (see note 5).

States.”⁹⁴ Its reputation reached New York, addressing Pope as “a very eminent authority on Oriental rugs, who enjoys the title of Honorary Advisor in Art to the Persian Government.”⁹⁵

The catalogue (fig. 9.4) was quite a costly task: the printing of the catalogue, including four color plates, cost about \$4,000; the copy was sold at \$4–7.50, while complimentary copies were sent off to dealers and scholars.⁹⁶ The Arts Club, which financed the publication of the catalogue, was very keen on selling the catalogue for profit gain, advertising it in this way:

The catalogue contains for the first time in English the announcement of a number of significant discoveries in the history of rugs made by Mr. Pope last year in Persia, Russia, the Caucasus, Germany and Italy. It thus becomes one of the most important publications on the subject of early rugs that has yet appeared.⁹⁷

While it was sent to Pope’s colleagues as complimentary copies in exchange for favorable book reviews,⁹⁸ the catalogue attracted a great deal of interest and received a number of requests for purchase from various places, including museums, schools and individuals.⁹⁹

While acknowledging Ackerman and some other individuals who got involved in the organization of the exhibition and catalogue publication, the catalogue is dedicated to Friedrich Sarre (1865–1945), the then director of the Islamic Department at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum (now the Museum

94 *Chicago Tribune*, January 9, 1926. This review also refers to C. E. C. (Creassey Edward Cecil) Tattersall (1877–1957), Keeper of the Department of Textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, who visited the show.

95 *New York Times*, January 17, 1926.

96 Letter from Pope to Altman, January 30, 1926, NL/ACC. The published price was quoted as seven dollars and a half but the Arts Club members received the discount price (4 dollars; see a small note “important”, Box 3, folder 85, NL/ACC).

97 “Important”, Box 3, folder 85, NL/ACC.

98 “The Chicago Arts Club who financed this publication wants to send out a notice to their members containing various reviews and favorable expressions which have come from my overgenerous colleagues. I wonder if you would allow me to quote part of your letter? They are naturally anxious to congratulate themselves on the success of the publication and the only way we hope to secure finds for research and publication is by convincing donors that the professional opinion of the world is approving,” letter from Pope to Thomas Arnold, May 30, 1927, NYPL/AUP.

99 Correspondences regarding the catalogue request are found in Box 3, Folder 85, NL/ACC.

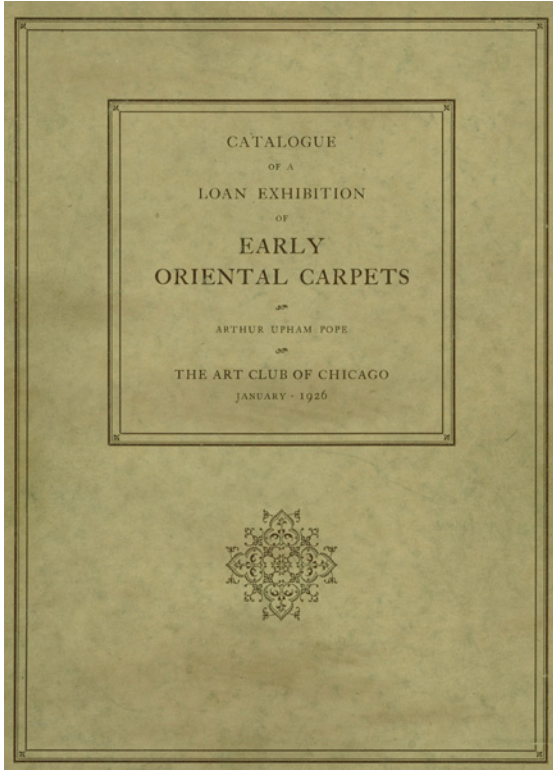


FIGURE 9.4 *Arthur Upham Pope: Catalogue of A Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets (Chicago, 1926).*

of Islamic Art in Berlin), on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.¹⁰⁰ Pope did profoundly admire Sarre's scholarship, and they developed professional, if not particularly friendly, relationship.¹⁰¹

Carpets from Persia occupy nearly half of the entire catalogue pages. Starting from northwest Persia, the entries are further sub-categorized

100 Pope 1926B, prefatory note.

101 For Sarre, see Kröger 2005. Sarre hardly left any negative comments on Pope's personality, but at the same time he did not leave any traces of fondness for Pope. Rather did he keep a certain distance with Pope who tended to push others to accept his ideas. I am most grateful to Jens Kröger and Joachim Gierlichs for sharing their knowledge on Sarre with me and for their help to handle research materials on Sarre available in Berlin and elsewhere.

according to Persian carpet provenance, such as Kashan or western Persia, eastern Persia (so-called Isfahan carpets), central Persia (so-called Vase carpets), and the courtly workshop (so-called Polonaise carpets). Praising Persian carpets at ranking all others, he states: “the Persian genius was responsible for much of the glory of all Muhammadan art and the art of rug weaving of the high school type was essentially a creation of Persian weavers, painters and designers.”¹⁰²

The problem of scholarship in Persian carpets is visible in the catalogue. This was mainly due to the lack of time in research, given that only two weeks were spent for writing up the catalogue.¹⁰³ The weakness of scholarship was effectively hidden by his eloquence. But at the same time Pope was afraid of criticism from senior carpet experts, notably Fredrik Robert Martin (1868–1933), an enigmatic Swedish scholar-collector-dealer, who set an important benchmark for collecting, studying and classifying Oriental carpets.¹⁰⁴

I hope Dr. Martin did not read too much of the catalog. He has done many useful services toward the history of art in the near east; but at the same time his work has justly been subjected to much criticism on many points, and in the interest of the advancement and increased knowledge on the subject, I had several occasions to take sharp issue with him. He may not have noticed it at all, but I do not believe he will particularly relish my notice of his book in the bibliography.¹⁰⁵

Maurice S. Dimand (1892–1986), then curator in charge of the newly created section for Islamic art in the Department of Decorative Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, who came to be known as an expert of Oriental carpets and later became one of the major rivals of Pope, wrote a book review

102 Pope 1926B, 18. The exact origin of the term ‘high school type’ remains unclear. It is likely that Pope coined it and referred to silky, delicately woven carpets from urban workshops, preferably with Safavid courtly provenance (see Kadoi 2012, 9).

103 For example, a letter from Pope to Trask, January 29, 1926, NL/ACC. Pope says, “... catalogue was written for 14 days and printed in 6 and half days and arrived at the exhibition 12 hours before the opening. . .”

104 Martin’s deluxe volume on Oriental carpets, *A History of Oriental Carpets before 1800* (Vienna, 1906–8), remains an important source of the history of Oriental carpet scholarship.

105 Letter from Pope to Mrs. Robert Devonshire, May 26, 1926, NYPL/AUP.

on his catalogue in a less critical manner and gently points out the lack of Indian carpets in the show.¹⁰⁶

Owing to its popularity, the carpet show was extended till February 10. Pope proposed to move the show to the Art Institute of Chicago during the rest of February in conjunction with an exhibition of Islamic art. Thus immediately after the sales, twenty-four carpets from the show were transferred to the Art Institute of Chicago,¹⁰⁷ and these were incorporated into some 400 exhibits of Islamic art at the Art Institute of Chicago that opened on February 13, 1926.¹⁰⁸

The total sales of rugs were some \$67,000; even deducting the cost of rugs (\$55,000), the profit reached almost \$12,000. The profit was equally divided between the Arts Club and Pope.¹⁰⁹ Aiming at raising the Arts Club gift purchase fund to support the acquisitions of the Art Institute and the Field Museum, the carpet show contributed to the addition of \$1,500 to this fund from the exhibition committee's commission on carpet sales.¹¹⁰

Besides the financial gain, the carpet show must have evoked a particular awe, a feeling that is still achieved in any display of Persian carpets, and generated a growing interest in this art form among the art community of the Windy City. It was perhaps no coincidence that in the same year Emily Crane Chadbourne (1871–1964) presented hundreds of diverse objects to the Art Institute, including some Oriental carpets.¹¹¹ The most notable example from the Chadbourne carpet collection is a rug (1926.1617), which was attributed to

106 Dimand 1926, 181. On the other hand, Pope criticizes Dimand's scholarship in carpets in a rather critical manner in an article published in 1925 (Pope 1925). The catalogue was also reviewed in the *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* (OLZ), 33/6 (1930), 430–2, by M. Meyerhof, and in the *Kunstwanderer*, July (1926), 502–3, by F. Sarre. On Dimand, Pope and Oriental carpet scholarship in the mid-1920s, see Kadoi 2010 for further discussion. The Pope-Dimand relationship is mentioned throughout the current volume.

107 Receipt number R 2671, Museum Registration Archives, Art Institute of Chicago.

108 According to *Chicago Tribune*, February 14, 1926, and the AIC newsletter, February 20, 1926. Both articles refer to a pair of early Turkish velvets from the Sarre collection in Berlin (this is testified by a letter from Pope to Sarre, February 18, 1926, NYPL/AUP [Surveyors, 154]) and textiles from the King of Saxony's collection.

109 See Folder 81, particularly a letter from the Arts Club to Pope, March 12, 1926, NL/ACC.

110 Chicago 1966, 5.

111 Nelson 2008, 132. Her donations of objects to the museum ranged from 1918 to 1957 and reached more than 2,000 objects. She also presented some mediaeval Persian ceramics (ibid., 137).

fifteenth-century Shiraz by Martin,¹¹² or to the Damascus group according to the carpet scholarship of the early twentieth century.¹¹³

This small yet focused exhibition was an ideal exercise for Pope. Having proved his curatorial management skills, Pope must have gained a certain confidence to organize a large-scale event, leading to a more ambitious exhibition project of Persian art in Philadelphia in the late fall of 1926. At the Sesquicentennial Exposition, Pope, as Special Commissioner for Persia, gathered a number of Persian carpets and other types of artefacts. While self-promoting the Chicago show to the director of the fine arts department at the Philadelphia exposition,¹¹⁴ Pope smartly arranged a transfer of the Bernheimer carpets from Chicago to Philadelphia.¹¹⁵

It is also worthy of mentioning that Pope's Oriental carpet show in Chicago was followed by an exhibition on Gothic tapestry curated by Phyllis Ackerman at the same venue.¹¹⁶ This reveals some aspects of the wife-and-husband team's continuous attempt to conquer the field of carpets and textiles, partially as a business strategy and partially as a scholarly venture, until their fame became firmly established in the early 1930s.

Beyond Chicago: Pope to the International Stage

By the mid-1930s, the Persian gallery had been installed at the Art Institute of Chicago in an old-fashioned yet enchanting manner (fig. 9.5), where a magnificent window grille (Gift of Arthur Upham Pope, 1931.468) was set in the center (fig. 9.6).¹¹⁷ The fashion for Muhammadan and Persian arts in the museum seems, however, to have been limited to the period when Pope was associated with the Art Institute. After his connection with Chicago was

112 Martin 1909.

113 Michelet 1931. This rug is currently attributed vaguely to North Africa, Syria, the Caucasus and Shiraz and the period ranging from the late seventeenth to the early eighteenth century.

114 "... the exhibition of the carpets here [Chicago] is the most important that has been gathered together temporality in America, with the single exception of the exhibition in 1910 at the Metropolitan. It is by far the most important group of carpets that has ever been made available for purchase, even in modern times . . ." letter from Pope to Trask, January 29, 1926, NL/ACC.

115 Letter from Pope to the Arts Club of Chicago, May 19, 1926, NL/ACC.

116 The show ran from December 12 to December 27, 1926. The catalogue (*Catalogue of A Loan Exhibition of Gothic Tapestry*) was written by Ackerman.

117 For this grille, see Kadoi 2013B. This grille is currently attributed to fifteenth-century Iran.

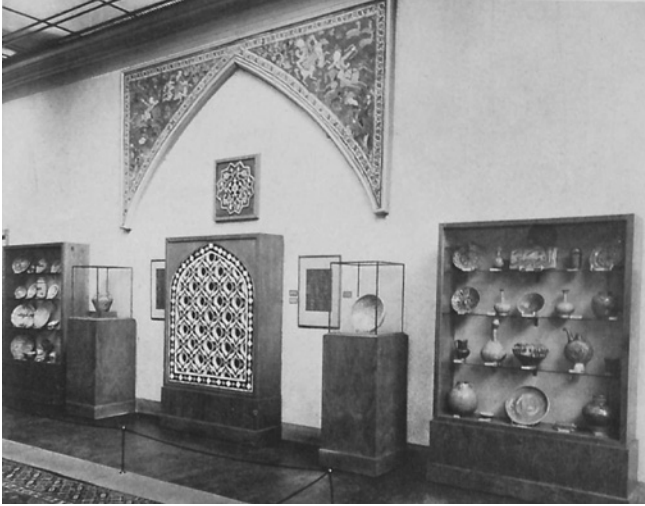


FIGURE 9.5 *The Persian Gallery, Art Institute of Chicago, ca. 1933–4: “This room contains a notable collection of Muhammadan art. In the cases are typical ceramics and on the walls, brilliant tiles” (AFTER THE BULLETIN OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, 28/5 [1934], 69).*

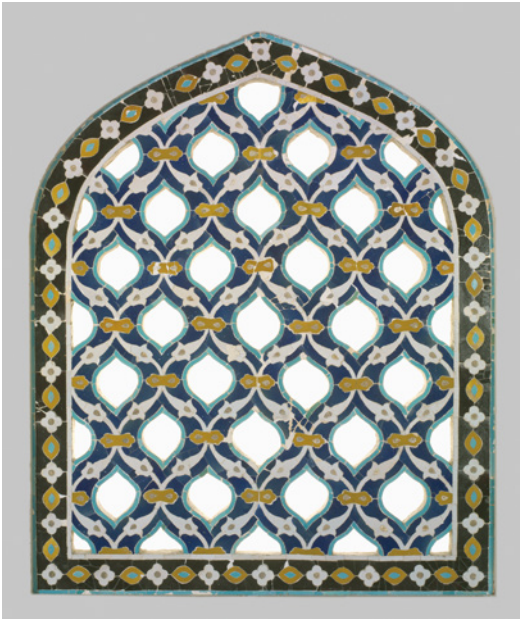


FIGURE 9.6 *Window grille, Iran, fifteenth century, Gift of Arthur Upham Pope. Art Institute of Chicago (1931.468).*

gradually fading in the mid-1930s, the gallery also lost its creative spirit. Most of the objects found in the photograph were eventually returned to a hidden corner of the storage, and they had almost never been properly displayed in their entirety until some of them were incorporated into the permanent installation of Islamic and later Indian art at the McKinlock court, as part of the Alsdorf Galleries (opened in the winter of 2008–9).¹¹⁸

Although Pope's professional stint in Chicago with an enigmatic title—Advisory Curator of Muhammadan Art—has received relatively less attention compared with his successful endeavors after the 1930s, it is crucial to understand his career transformation from a college professor to an art consultant, curator and independent scholar in the mid-1920s. Despite a comparatively short period, Chicago provided Pope with an invaluable opportunity for his career transformation.¹¹⁹ For him, the Art Institute of Chicago was an ideal base to cultivate his curatorial skills so as to expand the art network toward his post-academic career, a thriving ambition which was paralleled by the Institute's aspiration to change into a leading cultural institution of America. This particular historical time—the first three decades of the twentieth century—was one of the defining times in the rise of non-western art scholarship and connoisseurship, and it helped him to act boldly and energetically. His Chicago projects, including his working relations with the Art Institute of Chicago and his carpet exhibition, served to recast the scholarly as well as market value of Islamic Persian art among the targeted audiences, namely emerging collectors and philanthropists in the heart of the Midwest. This, ultimately, encouraged the shaping of ideas as to how the Persian art of the Islamic period should be appreciated, traded and classified in relation to other branches of non-western arts, a canon which continues to exert an enduring impact on our Persian art connoisseurship today.

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¹¹⁸ See *Orientations*, 43/3 (2011; special issue of the Alsdorf Galleries at the Art Institute of Chicago). New galleries for Islamic art opened in 2014.

¹¹⁹ "I had a short, exciting life as museum curator, serving for less than a year as director of the California Palace of the Legion Honor Museum, then ten peaceful years as Advisory Curator of Muhammadan Art in the Art Institute of Chicago and now for thirty years as advisor to the Pennsylvania Museum in Persian Art . . .," quoted in *Surveyors*, 45.

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FIGURE 10.1 *Photograph featuring the Mosaic Spandrels of an Arch, probably Isfahan region, Iran, early seventeenth century. Glazed ceramic tile and gold leaf. H. 8 ft. 6 5/16 in. × W. 19 ft. 5 1/8 in. (259.8737 × 592.1375 cm). Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 33-663/1-10. Installed in the 'Persian Room' at the Nelson Gallery. Taken between 1955 and 1983 (COURTESY OF DEPARTMENT FILE).*

Arthur Upham Pope and Collecting Persian Art for Kansas City¹

Kimberly Masteller

Every great city should have a great museum. This was a prevailing notion among cultural and civic leaders in America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This sentiment was certainly held by William Rockhill Nelson (1841–1915), the owner of the *Kansas City Star* and an arts enthusiast. Nelson felt strongly enough about the value of museums that he committed his wealth to the founding of a museum and art collection for Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City was not alone in this cultural project in the central United States. Great art museums were being constructed across the Midwest, in cities such as: Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Minneapolis, and St. Louis, where they rested like crowning jewels upon elegant networks of boulevards and parks conceived during the City Beautiful urban planning movement. All of these museums share key characteristics with the Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, now known as the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: they all developed global art collections, they all collected art from the historical Islamic lands, particularly Persian art; and they all purchased art through the Persian art scholar and consultant Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969).²

1 I am grateful to several colleagues at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art who assisted in the research and preparation of this article, including: Department Assistant Kate Butler, Object Conservators Kate Garland, Paul Benson, Joe Rogers and Kress Fellow in Conservation Jiafang Liang, Museum Archivist Holly Wright, our Imaging Services Department and Curatorial Intern Chloe Lundgren for her research on the Pope ceramics in 2011. I also wish to thank the curators and registrars from the other Midwestern museums that shared information about their holdings of Pope objects and I wish to thank editor Yuka Kadoi for her invitation to participate in this volume and for her encouragement and patience in this process.

2 The Art Institute of Chicago acquired some 300 objects through Pope; email correspondence from Yuka Kadoi. The Cincinnati Art Museum acquired twelve objects through Pope; email correspondence from Hou-mei Sung, Curator of Chinese Art and Lisa DeLong, Assistant Registrar. The Cleveland Museum of Art acquired one object through Pope in 1925; email correspondence from Anita Chung, Curator of Chinese Art and Deirdre L. Vodanoff, Curatorial Assistant, Textiles and Islamic Art. The Detroit Institute of Art acquired forty-nine objects through Pope between 1929 and 1940; email correspondence from Rachael

This chapter explores Kansas City's own story of engagement with Persian art. It is a story tied to a particular era: the late 1920s and early 1930s; and to a particular event: the founding of a new museum. Moreover, it is a story that links three men: the newspaper magnate W. R. Nelson, the real estate developer and Nelson trustee, Jesse Clyde Nichols (1880–1950), and Arthur Upham Pope. They shared a vision for Kansas City that saw the museum and its collection as instrumental in its transformation from a rugged frontier boomtown into a world class city.³ However, the manner through which the museum would achieve this goal and the decision over what the museum should showcase was envisioned differently by these actors, particularly between Pope, Nichols, and the other Nelson trustees, which is evident in their correspondence.

The trustees of the Nelson Gallery sought to create a suite of galleries that included a focus on the arts of West Asia and Greater Iran. They developed the collections in this area through both archaeological excavations and acquisitions of works available through the secondary art market, which are addressed in the first and second parts of this chapter, respectively. Pope was instrumental in supplying several key acquisitions which became highlights of the Nelson Gallery's 'Persian Room.' Three of those objects, two mina'i bowls and a monumental Safavid mosaic arch (fig. 10.1), offer particular insights into the restoration practices, mercantile networks, and personalities associated with the Islamic Art market in the early twentieth century, and are the focus of parts three and four of this chapter. However, we begin the story of the germination of a Persian art collection for Kansas City, somewhat ironically, with the death of William Rockhill Nelson.

Goodwin. The Minneapolis Institute of Art acquired one object from Pope in 1922; email correspondence from Liu Yang, Curator of Chinese Art. The St. Louis Art Museum acquired thirty-seven objects through Pope between 1921 and 1946; email correspondence from Mimi Hwang, research assistant. Thanks to Kate Butler, Department Assistant at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art for assisting in surveying and compiling these collection statistics in 2010–1.

3 Nelson and Nichols were directly associated with the transformation of Kansas City into a cultural and architectural center modeled upon other city centers in the eastern U.S. and Europe. Nelson was known to be a vocal supporter of George E. Kessler's city plan to beautify Kansas City through a series of urban parks. His own land and estate would become the grounds for the Nelson Gallery. Nichols was the key figure in Kansas City's urban planning in the twentieth century. Nichols designed the Country Club Plaza, based upon the architecture of Seville, Spain and planned several neighborhoods to the south of the downtown that reflect strong European influences in the design of their homes and landscaping. In this sense, the art museum is one of several key strategies, along with city planning and architectural design, which helped to civilize and modernize Kansas City.

Creating a Museum for Kansas City

In 1926, three “University Trustees:” William Volker, Herbert V. Jones and J. C. Nichols, were appointed to manage the assets of the William Rockhill Nelson estate. Nelson, in his will, stated that he wanted his estate to help found a collection for a museum of Fine Art for Kansas City.⁴ The task of the Nelson trustees, who would serve as the museum’s board of trustees, was to evaluate the remaining assets (which included: the local *Kansas City Star* and the *Times* newspapers, various properties throughout Kansas City, and a working farm outside the city) and then develop a scheme for managing them. The newspapers were sold at public auction for a near-record price of eleven million dollars. These proceeds were used to create a trust to fund the purchase of art works for the museum.⁵ The sale was marred by controversy as a losing bidder for the newspapers, local rival publisher Walter S. Dickey, claimed that he, in fact, had been the winning bidder and subsequently sued the trustees. This problem was actually beneficial to the museum in the long run. As the funds from the sale of the newspapers were tied up in litigation for three years—which went all the way to the Supreme Court—the trustees had time to visit other museums, consult with museum leaders in the United States and Europe and determine what kind of art that they wanted to collect.⁶

The Nelson trustees developed a strong interest in art from West Asia early in their tenure, even before they were actively building the collections or the facility to house them. They wanted the Nelson Gallery to become a recognized player in the field of antiquities. In order to achieve this status, they thought the museum needed to be an active partner in excavations, following the example of other established institutions, like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

J. C. Nichols took a leading interest in collections development for the museum during his time on the board of trustees. Nichols was committed to

4 While there was no immediate provision in Nelson’s will for the museum building at the time of his death, the museum’s future site and funds for its construction were provided after the estate passed through Nelson’s heirs, his widow, Ida, and daughter and son-in-law, Laura and Irwin Kirkwood. The Nelson estate funds were to be combined with the estate of local schoolteacher Mary Atkins to build the art museum. The conditions of the will and formation of the trustees are discussed in Pearson and Pearson 1994, 107.

5 Ibid., 108.

6 It is clear from the minutes of the trustee meetings, dating from 1926 through 1929, that trustees used this time learn about museums, consult with directors of other institutions and file away contacts who offered their services as art specialists and dealers. See board of trustee minutes 1926–9, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. This opinion is also expressed in Pearson and Pearson 1994, 107–8.

making the Nelson Gallery a national destination through building an important art collection and was the first of many figures associated with the Nelson Gallery to focus efforts on collecting Asian art. With Nichols' backing, the museum began pursuing Chinese art on a large scale, as well as Indian and West Asian art. According to colleague Dr. Nicholas Pickard, "J. C. Nichols wanted to collect a civilization. Cost made it prohibitive to try and do this with Egypt, or Greece, or Rome. He believed that national recognition would come with the establishment of a definitive collection representative of a civilization."⁷

While traveling in Europe in 1928, Nichols negotiated a partnership with the Louvre to undertake a joint excavation at Telloh, Iraq. Correspondence between Nichols and Henri Verne (1880–1949), Director of the *Musées Nationaux* and de l'Ecole du Louvre, reveals both the Nelson trustees' eagerness to develop a Near Eastern collection and also their realization of potential problems they could face due to the unknowable quality of objects they would find. According to a June 22, 1928 letter from Nichols to Verne, the Nelson trustees were prepared to split the costs of the expedition with the Louvre with a commitment of six thousand dollars in return for an appropriate share of the finds.⁸ While the Nelson trustees would not participate in the actual excavation, their financial support appears to have been greatly appreciated. The generosity of the Nelson trustees was recognized through the award of a formal decree from the French Government dated August 25, 1928, signed by both Verne and by Édouard Herriot, the national Minister of l'Instruction Publique and des Beaux-Arts.⁹

The Telloh excavation was a sensitive and personally risky undertaking for the Nelson trustees. Nichols shared with Verne that "due to the litigation pending relative to our trusteeship and due to certain other terms of the will we [the trustees] did not think it was advisable to make this agreement directly in the name of the William Rockhill Nelson Trust. Consequently, we three trustees are assuming the financial responsibility and will participate to the amount named in our telegram [6,000 dollars.]"¹⁰ The trustees fronted the costs of the excavation personally, hoping not to miss out on an important opportunity for their fledgling museum. It is also clear through the correspondence that they

7 Pickard's comments are published in Pearson and Pearson 1994, 136.

8 See letter from J. C. Nichols to Henri Verne, dated June 22, 1928 in Telloh Excavation file, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

9 This honorary decree from the French government is the next dated document in the Telloh files, following an August 5, 1928 letter from Nichols to trustee William Volker, stating that he had that day mailed a draft for 150,000 francs (roughly 6,000 dollars) to Henri Verne at the Louvre. It appears the decree was issued in short order after receipt of the trustee's funds. Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

10 Ibid.

expected to be able to reimburse themselves from the trust when the funds were finally available.¹¹

Another concern made their commitment to the Telloh excavation especially risky. Nichols told Verne that, according to Nelson's will, the money from the trust could only be used for "objects that would be classified as fine art."¹² Suddenly the physical condition and aesthetic qualities of archaeological materials not yet excavated became a chief concern. Nichols indicated in a 1929 letter to Verne that the Nelson trustees could only be reimbursed from the trusteeship funds if "the articles could properly be classified as objects of fine art and represent a value equal to the cost."¹³ Nichols continues, "If this does not turn out to be the case then each of them propose to stand the loss personally." Nichols used these concerns to explain why they would prefer to take shipment of their share of objects from the first expedition and determine their quality and appropriateness for their museum before committing to fund another phase of the Telloh excavations.¹⁴

The Telloh excavation yielded fifty-seven objects destined for Kansas City. These objects became the first acquisitions of the Nelson Gallery. While this initial foray in Near Eastern archaeology did not dampen the Nelson trustee's enthusiasm for the arts of West Asia, it did make them wiser and more cautious regarding excavation projects. Still, the Nelson trustees advocated for the support of two more West Asian expeditions in the early 1930s, with a commitment of 1,500 dollars to William Bade's excavations at Mizpah, Palestine¹⁵ and an advance of 11,400 dollars to excavations by Frederick Wulsin (1891–1961) in Iran for the University of Pennsylvania.¹⁶ In each case, the trustees stipulated that their funding of archaeological activities had to be repaid in excavated objects of fine art quality which matched (or exceeded) the value of their financial commitment. They further stated that they would hold their support of future projects until they evaluated the quality of the resulting material. By working in this conservative manner, the Nelson trustees could

11 Letter from Nichols to Verne dated "[sic] first, 1928" states Nichols' hope that the litigation against the trust, now being considered by the Supreme Court, would hopefully be resolved in thirty days. See Telloh Excavation file, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

12 The will was cited in a letter from Nichols to Verne dated September 18, 1929, Telloh Excavation file, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, October 9, 1931, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

16 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, March 20–21, 1932, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

hold to the terms of Nelson's will while collecting antiquities, thus protecting the trust's financial holdings, and their own.

The three year duration of the lawsuit against the William Rockhill Nelson Trust had proven useful. It created an incubation period that allowed trustees to envision the kind of museum they wanted to create. It also created a rush to buy art when access to the Nelson acquisition funds became available in 1930. Now, at the moment when the rest of the country and its institutions were mired in the depths of the Great Depression, the Nelson trustees were ready to act. They also had learned from their experiments in archaeology that they needed expert advice. In 1931, the trustees hired Harold Woodbury Parsons, a specialist in Ancient art and an advisor to the Cleveland Museum, to work as a buyer and collections advisor for the Nelson-Atkins. Expertise in Asian Art was further developed through an initial consultation in 1931 followed by a formal arrangement in 1932, with noted Harvard professor Langdon Warner.¹⁷ Warner, a renowned specialist in Chinese Art, traveled frequently in Asia and had numerous contacts in the art markets of Asia, Europe, and the US. Both Parsons and Warner would become influential in the development of Islamic art collections at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

The Nelson Gallery's early engagement with West Asian art was enthusiastic, yet the trustees were tempered by doubts about artistic quality and their own expertise in the field. By 1932, things were different. Guided by experts in the fields of European and Asian art and their knowledge in the marketplace, the Nelson trustees were now ready to buy Persian art. They were even planning to create a 'Persian' period room in the Nelson Gallery, which was now under construction and set to open in 1933. They needed art to fill the Persian Room and they needed it fast. It was at this moment, that the Nelson Trustees met Arthur Upham Pope.

Filling the Museum in Kansas City, Arthur Upham Pope and Acquiring Persian Art

The proceedings of March 20 and 21, 1932 were focused on Persia. Nelson Trustees Nichols and Jones had traveled to New York and were holding introductory meetings with Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977),

¹⁷ Board of Trustees meeting minutes, January 12, 1932. Warner would soon recommend his graduate student, Laurence Sickman, to take a lead role in seeking out acquisitions of Chinese Art. Warner advised on early purchases of Islamic Art. Sickman went on to become the Asian Curator and then Director of the Nelson Gallery from 1953 to 1977.

and with Wulsin about the University of Pennsylvania Iranian expedition. They also met with their art consultants, Harold Parsons and Langdon Warner.

The trustees' meeting with Pope appears to have gone very well. Nichols described Pope as "the celebrated authority on Persian art and who has spent many years in Persia."¹⁸ Nichols asked Pope to submit a list of works of Persian art for purchase consideration "not to exceed \$10,000 to \$12,000 in cost, which would form a beginning in Persian art [at the museum]."¹⁹ The meeting notes later state that the trustees asked Parsons and Warner to further research his list of recommended objects and select from it a group of objects not exceeding \$12,000 total.²⁰

Wasting no time, Pope submitted an eight page proposal to the trustees on March 21; what Nichols characterized as "quite a long report."²¹ The proposal opened with a two page essay that made an impassioned case for museum investment in Persian art based upon two criteria: the "recognition of the intrinsic merit and historical importance of Persian art" and the "scarcity of materials of high quality."²² Pope then proposed a list of objects that could provide a core collection to the Nelson Gallery, including: seventeenth century mosaic spandrels of an arch, a seventeenth century metallic, silk brocade panel, two mina'i bowls, a turquoise basin, a cobalt glazed pitcher, an embroidered panel, a salmon colored silk brocade, a tapestry carpet, a stucco architectural panel from Rayy, an Achaemenian sculpture, and various manuscript paintings and folios. Pope offered this group of objects to the trustees for \$33,850.00. Pope also recommended that the museum make further acquisitions through supporting archaeological projects and advocated pledging \$5,000 to support the Pennsylvania Museum's excavations at Damghan.²³

Pope received only partial interest in his initial offerings to the Nelson Gallery. In an August 8, 1932 meeting of the Nelson trustees, the board approved a payment of \$7,464.00 to Pope for five objects: the silver brocade panel, the two mina'i ceramics, a turquoise plate [basin?], and a bronze horse bit. This was a fraction of the thirty thousand dollar collection of objects that Pope had proposed to the Museum in March. At this time, the trustees passed upon acquiring Pope's mosaic tile arch spandrels.

18 Board of Trustees, New York meeting summary, March 20–21, 1932, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Letter from Pope to Nichols, March 1, 1932 including a narrative on the importance of Persian art and a detailed list of recommendations for acquisition. Departmental File.

23 Ibid.

In efforts to develop the best collection possible from what was available to them, the Nelson trustees were consulting with other Islamic art dealers as well. During the same trip that they met with Pope, Nichols and Jones also examined the offerings of ceramics expert and New York dealer, Hagop Kevorkian (1872–1962). In the board meeting minutes of May 27, 1932, Nichols reported:

We spent much time in the galleries of two Persian Art dealers and was [*sic*] very much impressed with the very wide selection of desirable art in this field. Both dealers are heavily loaded with an immense stock of desirable things and one of them is particularly hard pressed for money.²⁴

The identity of the person thought to be financially “hard pressed” is not indicated, but later discussions reveal that Kevorkian’s objects greatly impressed the trustees. In an August 11th board meeting, convened just three days after the meeting which approved the Pope acquisitions, the Nelson trustees approved a payment of \$50,000 to Kevorkian for works of Islamic and Indian art. These objects included: a Persian tile spandrel, a group of Persian tiles, a door “representing Miniature Paintings,” a wooden Indian temple,²⁵ a Gandharan stone statue, a “Dragon Carpet,” an Indo-Persian palace carpet, two Turkish prayer carpets, three miniature paintings, a Luristan bronze, a Persian vase, a Persian platter, an Egyptian faience vase, and ninety-three Persian ceramics ranging in date from prehistoric to the fourteenth century CE.²⁶ This large acquisition was intended to augment the initial purchase from Pope and complete a core collection for the museum’s Persian display. The expense of this transaction also suggests that the trustees may have exceeded the amount that they had allocated for the purchase of Islamic art in 1932.

Pope soon learned that the Nelson Gallery had made purchases from other sources and expressed his disappointment to fellow Nelson consultant, Langdon Warner. Pope may have discovered that Warner was directly involved in the rival purchases, for Warner had been asked to negotiate them on behalf of the museum. Indeed, the Nelson trustees report of March 20–21 states: “We have arranged for Mr. Warner to further negotiate with them [the two Persian

24 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, May 27, 1932, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

25 This is a carved, polychrome wooden shrine door, lintel and porch from a Jain temple, not the well-known wooden temple ceiling from South India currently on view at the Nelson-Atkins in Gallery 228.

26 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, August 11, 1932, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

Art sources in New York] in the selection of things so as to get a good representation in rugs, glass, pottery, wood carving, sculpture, panels, etc.”²⁷ In a letter dated September 14, 1932, Pope appears to challenge Warner, warning him against the perils of acquiring Persian art without his sound guidance and suggesting that Warner, himself, was not knowledgeable enough in this field to do so.

Word has also come that these purchases were made on the advice of other experts beside yourself. I know you do not pretend to expertness in this most tricky and complicated of all phases of art. . . . Your own field of Chinese art, different as it is, is I think not quite so difficult as the Near Eastern field. If purchases were to be made, it would be a scandal if they were not made at the advice of real experts.²⁸

Pope then asks Warner the identity of his rival consultants to the Nelson Gallery. “Who are these experts? Were they brought in by the seller even indirectly, or were they secured by the Museum?”²⁹

At the end of the letter, Pope discusses the financial burden created by the Nelson trustee’s choice to acquire their objects from other sources:

This failure of my hopes to render any valuable service to Kansas City is a very real blow to me . . . It comes frankly as a practical calamity at a time when I am financing the *Survey*, a great deal of the American Institute work, and all my own research. The amount of the commission I would have had from the sale of the mosaic faience is a very serious item just now. I am bounding along on borrowed money. . . .³⁰

The hardships he describes are personal, but his writing indicates that he was focused upon his greater projects, the *Survey of Persian Art* and his Institute, and was equally concerned about how his financial situation would impact them.³¹

27 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, May 27, 1932, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

28 Letter from Pope to Langdon Warner, September 14, 1932 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 167).

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 The financial interconnectedness of Pope’s academic projects and commercial work may appear inappropriate by today’s ethical standards, but we must remember that Pope was active during a different era, when Islamic art history was a relatively young field and one that heavily populated by amateur scholars and archaeologists. If the field was young, the institutions supporting it were fledgling, if that. As Pope’s *Survey of Persian*

Pope, the Persian Art Market and the Art and Artifice of Restoration

In the end, the Nelson Gallery of Art had a fruitful relationship with Arthur Upham Pope. Between 1932 and 1935, the Nelson trustees acquired fifty-four objects through Pope, and fifty remain in the collection today. The works acquired by the Nelson Gallery through Pope represent what was available on the market in the early decades of the twentieth century and also what met the standard of taste for great Islamic art at the time. Persian art, in particular, fulfilled both of these categories. Of those works, sixteen examples of pottery and metalwork are from the ancient Iranian cultures while the rest of the objects are associated with Islamic cultures in Iran, dating from the tenth through the seventeenth centuries. The Islamic acquisitions from Pope are dominated by twenty-one Persian ceramic objects, including: ten separate components of a mosaic arch (discussed below), four works on paper, two book covers, three textile panels and three examples of decorative metalwork.

The Pope objects are representative of the collecting trends in European and American museums in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For example, luxurious Asian textiles that had been privately collected in Europe for centuries, now became an important focus for American museums. The Nelson trustees had identified textiles as a necessary part of their foundational collection. In 1931 they acquired three hundred and seventy-seven textiles at the auction of the Marcel von Nemes collection; one hundred and ten of these textile panels and fragments, including many silk brocades and velvets, were Persian, Turkish, and Indian in origin. The few weavings acquired from Pope served to augment their already strong textile holdings.

The Nelson Gallery's Islamic ceramics are also representative of what was popular and available on the early twentieth century art market. Large scale collecting of Islamic ceramics began in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Islamic ceramics market was clearly based upon trends, as particular typologies became popular for their technical achievements and stylistic qualities. In his informative introduction to *Ceramics from the Islamic Lands*, Oliver Watson discusses the prevalent taste for Persian lustre ware in the nineteenth century and how it gave way for a preference for polychrome mina'i wares in the twentieth century.³² Mina'i ware was certainly in fashion when the Nelson

Art would provide a basic atlas of arts from the Iranian world, Pope's Institute would provide an institutional structure for publication and cultural exchange. Both were well-intentioned and worthy causes, but difficult to support.

32 See Watson 2004, 14–15.

trustees acquired two elegant bowls with figural designs from Pope (32–24 and 32–36).

The Nelson mina'i wares reveal much about the modern lives of these ceramics, from their discovery and restoration before reaching their gallery showrooms in New York. Like most Islamic ceramics, the Nelson mina'i bowls are fragmentary objects. They were excavated from Seljuk era sites in Iran, likely by amateurs, and were found broken into multiple pieces. Iranian excavators would have collected all of the seemingly related sherds and brought them to a location where craftspeople would attempt to restore them.³³ There are many common problems that restorers of these archaeological materials faced. For example, the sherds they had to work with, when reassembled, may not have created a complete object, individual sherds may have been discolored, or, key elements of their decoration may have been lost through glaze loss or deterioration. At this point decisions would have to be made about how to complete a restoration. Given the extensive work undertaken to restore ceramics from this period, we must assume that the simple reassembly of these objects was deemed unacceptable; the works had to be restored in a manner that made them complete and aesthetically pleasing. Obviously, ceramics that were better in terms of their condition and appearance had a higher market value. The desire for the perfect object clearly drove the restorations that we see in Persian ceramics collected by the Nelson Gallery in the early twentieth century, which were intended to create whole objects, conceal flaws and complete decorative programs, when possible.

The small mina'i *Bowl* with figural painting and gilded decoration in the Nelson collection (32–26) (fig. 10.2) illustrates how far the modern restorer would have gone to reform and redecorate a ceramic vessel intended for sale. During a recent conservation treatment, conservators removed the extensive overpainting which was applied during an earlier restoration. It quickly became evident that the gold decoration was gold paint applied on top of the overpainting, leaving only a few areas of original gilding after cleaning.³⁴ With the overpainting removed, the differences in the hue and surface condition of the glaze and enamel painting of the different components of the bowl were striking (fig. 10.3).

Conservator Kate Garland determined that several sherds with bright, white glaze and equally bright enamel painting were, in fact, newly fired ceramics

33 It is assumed that these restorations were being carried out, at least initially, in Iran, near the source material where restorers would have greater access to sherds. See Norman 2004, 73–74.

34 For the discovery and treatment of another mina'i ware gilded during restoration, see Norman 2004, 71–72.



FIGURE 10.2

Bowl, Iran, late twelfth-early thirteenth century. Fritware, opaque white lead glaze with in-glaze and over-glaze painting and gilding (mina'i ware), 2 3/4 × 6 3/4 inches (7 × 17.1 cm). The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 32-26

(PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART).

FIGURE 10.3 *Bowl, 32-26, after removal of overpaint and later gilding*

(PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF OBJECTS CONSERVATION, THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART, 2010).

that were not original to the bowl. The manufacture of new sherds to restore original objects is not an unknown practice and has been documented in the study of a bowl in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.³⁵ It was not clear where these new sherds were manufactured or whether the bowl was subject to multiple treatments before coming to Kansas City.

Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants (32–24) (fig. 10.4) offered further evidence of restorers using newly manufactured components. During its recent conservation treatment, examination under ultraviolet and infrared light suggested that this bowl also had extensive overpainting. Upon removal of the paint, it was discovered that the bowl contained four sherds that were not original to the object. These sherds continued the decorative program of the bowl, forming the left half of the seated figure to the upper right and the entire standing figure to the center right of the bowl. Solvents did not remove the figural painting from the inserted sherds, and their decoration was also determined to be fired enamel.

As in the case of the previous bowl, close examination of the inserted sherds in *Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants* (32–24) revealed distinct differences from the rest of the bowl, including the use of different hue of white glaze and a different palette of enamel paint. The inserted sherds also exhibited almost no crackle in their glaze. Stylistically, the drawings on the inserted sherds did not match that of the rest of the bowl either. The figures drawn and painted on two of these sherds have square rather than round jaws and were rendered in thick lines with a heavy hand (fig. 10.5). They lack the light, calligraphic and curvilinear lines that were used throughout the rest of the decoration of this bowl.

Had the inserted sherds exhibited a similar patina, color palette, and drawing style, one might assume that the restorers were reusing fragments from another Seljuk-era mina'i bowl, perhaps found at the same site. However, as in the case of the previous bowl, nothing about these sherds suggests that they are old. With the aid of a microscope, a comparative inspection of the enameled figures from original and inserted sherds revealed that even the pigments used to paint them were ground to a different consistency. The original sherds have coarsely-ground particles forming the pigments of their enamels, indicating they were ground by hand with a mortar and pestle. The inserted sherds exhibit extremely fine particles forming the pigments of their enamel. These fine pigments are most certainly mechanically ground. The analysis confirms that early modern restorers were actively recreating missing components of ceramic objects with newly fabricated ceramics and modern pigments.

35 See Pease 1958.



FIGURE 10.4

Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants, from the site of Rayy, near Tehran, Iran, late twelfth-early thirteenth century. Fritware, opaque white lead glaze with in-glaze and over-glaze painting and gilding (mina'i ware), $3 \frac{1}{4} \times 7 \frac{5}{8}$ inches (8.3 × 19.4 cm). The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 32–24 (PHOTOGRAPH: JAMISON MILLER).

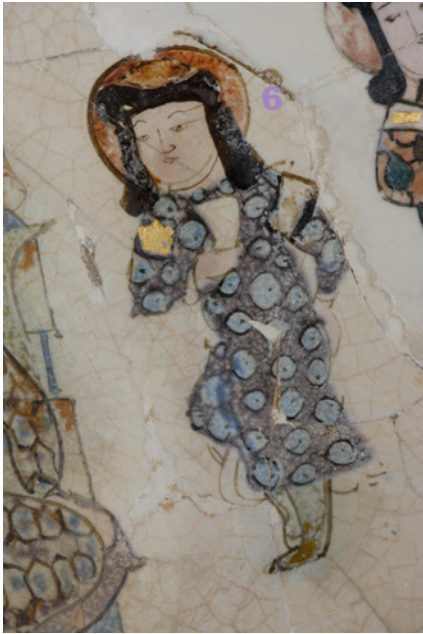


FIGURE 10.5 *Details from Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants, 32–24. Left: detail of original figure, right of center after removal of overpaint. Right: detail of figure on newly fired sherd, right side. The figures have been identified in these conservation photographs as #6 and #7 (PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF OBJECTS CONSERVATION, THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART. 2010).*

It is clear that as early as 1932, and even in the hands of an expert as reputable and knowledgeable as Arthur Upham Pope, creative and deceptive restorations of Persian ceramics were abundant in the marketplace. There is no evidence to suggest that Pope was aware of the re-manufactured elements of the Nelson bowls. Indeed, when they were newly conserved, decades before the overpainting began to discolor, the bowls may have looked quite convincingly complete and accurate. In a letter sent to Edward J. Holmes, the director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Pope warns that he may have been fooled by a bowl that he had previously given to the museum:

As Koechlin said, there is no collector, museum, or scholar who has had any opportunities and experience who has not sometime been deceived. I claim no exception, but I only try to learn each time I am caught. I don't think I have been caught in the last ten years on a complete falsification, but I have been twice deceived by the remaking or re-working of old pieces, and judging by some fragments I have seen and information I have been able recently to acquire, I am very uneasy about the bowl I gave the museum. . . . I shall have something which amounts to proof shortly. It seems that a group of these bowls were found at Amol and re-glazed, and there is a very good chance that my piece is one. If you could graciously retire it for the time being, I should be relieved. . . .³⁶

In the case of the Nelson mina'i bowls, the restorers went to great efforts creating new sherds, rendering the figures in enamel, rather than creating them in paint, in order to make a close match with the original decoration. They were quite successful with the *Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants*, which looked like a uniform vessel under its cloak of overpaint. In its nearly complete and original condition, that bowl would have already been considered an exceptional work of art by any museum. With the addition of newly fired components, the *Bowl with Scene of Courtier and Attendants* now provides a fascinating window into the restoration practices and market pressures that impacted the world in which Pope operated; where he came to know, promote, and sell Persian art.

The Spandrels of a Safavid Mosaic Arch

The grandest object the Nelson Gallery acquired from Pope is undoubtedly the Persian arch formed from mosaic spandrels (fig. 10.1). This architectural

36 Letter from Pope to Edward J. Holmes, September 12, 1932 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 163).

element appears to date to the early seventeenth century during the Safavid dynasty and reflects the stylistic innovations of mosaic decoration commissioned during the reign of Shah 'Abbas I. The arch is large in scale, spanning approximately fourteen feet in height and twenty feet in width. Its rich color, elegant vegetal patterning and sheer scale elicit a strong impression. This is just the kind of evocative object the Nelson trustees were searching for to ornament their Persian Room. The acquisition of an appropriate arch for Kansas City was not a straight forward or easy process and this purchase and the events associated with it mark the most difficult moment in the relationship between Pope and the Nelson Gallery.

Pope had pitched his mosaic arch to the Nelson trustees, placing it at the top of his original list of recommended objects for purchase in 1932. Pope's discussion of the arch emphasized its historical importance, its visual qualities and its rarity in museum collections. Pope identified the spandrel as dating to the early seventeenth century and as coming from Isfahan's Royal Bazaar.³⁷ In his comments, he exalted the great achievement of mosaic faience in rendering "the most intensely colored and beautifully patterned architectural ornament that has been achieved."³⁸ Pope described the arch in wonderful detail, beginning with its cobalt ground color, "fluctuating between midnight blue and almost indigo black."³⁹ He continued his vivid description the other elements of the mosaic design, as being "brilliant turquoise; . . . apple green, fawn, yellow, milk white and mirror black."⁴⁰ After describing the work, Pope then emphasized its rarity, stating that aside from a grilled window in the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum and the paneled room at the Philadelphia Museum of Art "no museum in the world possesses more than a few square feet of this work."⁴¹

As grand as Pope's arch sounded from the description, the Nelson trustees had opted instead to acquire a Persian tile arch from Kevorkian as part of their large purchase of Islamic and Indian objects from his gallery in 1932. However, in spring 1933, as the completion of the Nelson Gallery was fast approaching, the trustees were having second thoughts about the Kevorkian arch. The arch was a major topic in the April 17 Board meeting: "The suitability of the tile span-

37 Letter from Pope to Nichols, February 21, 1933, Departmental File. The actual, original location of the arch is unknown at this time.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid. Pope's assertion of the rarity of Islamic mosaic tile in museums was probably true in the early 1930s. Other well-known examples, such as the mosaic tile mihrab niche, dated AH 755/1354–5, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York was acquired in 1939, while the mosaic tile mihrab at the Cleveland Museum of Art entered that collection in 1960.

drel and the Turkish Transylvania mihrab rug purchased from Kevorkian last summer was discussed. It was decided that Mr. Nichols would see Kevorkian when in New York and attempt to make an exchange of these two objects.”⁴² The trustees were also consulting with other Islamic Art specialists, including Phyllis Ackerman, regarding how to remedy their problem and find another Persian arch that better suited their needs. The trustees shared that, apparently “Mr. Kevorkian has a finer spandrel which could be taken in exchange as this has been intimated in a letter from Mrs. Ackerman.”⁴³ Ackerman certainly informed her husband, Pope, about Kansas City’s desire to exchange the Kevorkian arch for another example, for in the same Board meeting, Nichols reported that he had recently received a letter from Pope regarding his blue spandrel, which he was now offering to the museum at the reduced price of \$3,500.⁴⁴ The trustees decided to offer Pope \$2,500 for the arch, half the price that it had been offered to the museum just a year before. Pope made arrangements to ship the arch from Paris, where it was in the possession of the dealer and friend, Ayoub Rabenou.

Once it reached Kansas City, Pope’s arch was also found to be problematic. The shipment of the spandrels was missing a section of mosaic at the left apex of the arch, which had been replaced by a mosaic section belonging to an entirely different arch. According to an August 15 letter from the assistant to the Nelson trustees, upon inspection “. . . the left corner for about 24 inches, is not for this spandrel . . .” The letter describes the urgent need to get the spandrel installed quickly and asks for Pope’s assistance in communicating with Rabenou in Paris to remedy the situation. Regarding the balance of payment owed for the arch, the assistant states “I personally feel that if another point cannot be sent and we have to rework the wrong one that we have, that the spandrel will have a far smaller value than it would if it were intact. In any event I am sure the Trustees will not care to send a check for the balance until some definite information from you has been received.”⁴⁵ Indeed, the Nelson trustees held the final payment on the arch until the shipment of its missing section, delaying the completion of the transaction for months longer than expected by all parties involved.

Pope’s response to the Nelson director Paul Gardner (1894–1972), dated September 13, acknowledged the mishap and notifies him that the missing section had arrived in New York one week earlier and should be in Kansas City by

42 Board of Trustees meeting minutes, April 17, 1933, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Letter from assistant to the Trustees to Pope, August 15, 1933, Departmental File.

the time the letter was written. However the letter's tone was far more accusatory than apologetic in regards to the trustees' handling of the issue. Pope first defended the artistic quality and rarity of the mosaic, stating that even if the Nelson had purchased a fragmentary arch "you got a very rare, distinguished, and important object for a price that has never been quoted to anybody at any time. Even without the tip of the spandrel, it would be worth a great deal more."⁴⁶

Pope then criticizes the Nelson Gallery's hold up of the transaction and details how they have not met their obligations to the vendor, Rabenou in Paris, or to him, as the agent of the sale. While agreeing that Rabenou should have overseen the packing of the mosaics more closely, Pope quickly came to his defense. "On the other hand, has Kansas City been wholly fair with him? I was authorized to make this price, much to Rabenou's regrets, because he was really facing bankruptcy and had to meet payments in July and on September first."⁴⁷ Pope continues by stating that, although final payment was to be made upon arrival of the arch in Kansas City, the crate sat unopened during the summer for weeks, without the museum inspecting the object or making expedient payment, as agreed.

Pope then explained just how damaging the unfulfilled transaction was to him, personally. Pope said that he advanced his own money to Rabenou, counting upon a timely payment from the Nelson trustees. "This left me absolutely without funds, with my wife ill, and in other ways too [*sic*] a most inconvenient time . . . Furthermore, I had urgent appointments in London and Paris and other obligations which I could not meet, my bank account was overdrawn and I was forced to the very disagreeable necessity of borrowing money merely for the daily expenses."⁴⁸ Pope questions the fairness of his treatment in the shipping mishap, ". . . would you [Gardner] want to establish the principle that if an order you made came in imperfectly, your salary should be deducted for a month or two at some critical time?"⁴⁹

The missing section of the mosaic arch did, indeed, arrive in Kansas City on September 21, as Pope had promised. On September 23, Paul Gardner authorized the \$1,164.72 balance remaining on the purchase of the arch to be cabled to Pope in England.⁵⁰ Then there was the matter of the remaining section from another mosaic to attend to. In a letter to Pope dating

46 Letter from Pope to Gardner, September 13, 1933, Departmental File.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Letter from Gardner to Miss Brelsford, secretary to the Trustees, September 23, 1933, Archives of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The amount of \$1,164.72 reflects the

September 21, 1933, Gardner said that the Nelson Gallery would send the mismatched arch section back to Rabenou in Paris at the dealer's expense.⁵¹ In a rather ominous footnote to the matter, Gardner informed Pope in December 1933 that Rabenou had not yet claimed the arch section which the Nelson Gallery had returned to him in Paris. The letter warns "if some action is not taken before the end of the month, the French government may sell it."⁵² Gardner asks Pope to work with American Express or Rabenou to resolve the matter, stating "it would seem a pity to have the point lost if the dealer still has the rest of the spandrel."⁵³ The art market is a potentially risky business, and this was certainly the case during the volatile years after the Great Depression. Gardner's letter may provide a window onto Rabenou's own precarious situation in 1933. Rabenou's inability to take delivery upon payment of the mosaic section suggests that Pope did not exaggerate his colleague's dire financial state.

After two years of searching, three dealers, two sales, two shipments, and two returns, the Nelson Gallery finally had a crowning architectural work to serve as the centerpiece for its Persian gallery. The Mosaic arch purchased through Pope was installed in the 'Persian Room' on the second floor of the Nelson Gallery in time for the gala opening of the Museum on December 11, 1933. There it served a kind of semiotic function, uniting the contents of the room that varied widely in date, visual style, cultural history and artistic medium under the larger, timeless mantle of 'Persian.' Barely fitting on the fourteen foot high walls, Pope's mosaic arch also nicely framed the entrance into the Indian temple gallery, named the 'Hindoo Room,' as evident in a later installation photo (fig. 10.1), which, ironically, includes two South and Southeast Asian sculptures acquired through Kevorkian after his Persian arch was returned.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The 1933 opening of the Nelson Gallery marked a high point in the presentation of Persian art in Kansas City and in many ways its success was due to

remaining one thousand dollars towards the purchase price, adjusted against the devaluation of the US dollar since the time of the agreed purchase.

51 Letter from Gardner to Pope, September 21, 1933, Departmental File.

52 Letter from Gardner to Pope, December 28, 1933, Departmental File.

53 Ibid.

54 The Gandharan *Bodhisattva* (35–32) and the Dvaravati *Buddha* (35–33) were both acquired through the Kevorkian Gallery.

the influence and acquisitions associated with Arthur Upham Pope. Though Persian art collecting continued at the Nelson after 1933, it never matched the pace and excitement of the activities connected with the foundation of the collection in the early 1930s. However, Pope's relationship with the Nelson Gallery remained strong throughout the decade. The museum acquired thirty-five more objects from Pope in 1934 and 1935. Pope requested to borrow objects from the collection for major Persian exhibitions, including the Nelson's silver bowl with gold rim from dating to the second century BCE. (35–37/2) (fig. 10.6).⁵⁵

The Nelson Gallery's waning activity in Persian and Islamic art in the late 1930s must have bothered Pope enough to complain about the museum's direction, and possibly its director. This is revealed in an apologetic letter from Pope to Nelson director Paul Gardner, where Pope responds to an accusation that he had often spoken to others of Gardner's ignorance of Persian art.⁵⁶ Pope clarifies that his comments were not personal, but were aimed at American museums in general, regarding their lack of awareness of the value and importance of Persian art. Pope draws a comparison to museum collecting in East Asian art, which was a major focus of the Nelson Gallery's under the direction of Nichols, Gardner and their young Asian curator, Laurence Sickman (1907–88).

The proportion of space, objects, money and effort that American museums in general expend on the art of the Far East is five to ten times that which is spent on the art of the Near East, and I do not believe that proportion can be defended. . . . It may be too late for the museums to correct any disbalance in their policies, but I will have done all I could to present the evidence conscientiously and with energy.⁵⁷

55 The bowl was requested for loan to the Fourth International Congress for Iranian Art and Archaeology, which was scheduled to take place in Paris in 1938. The Congress was cancelled after the escalation of political events in Europe and not held again until 1960, in New York. The silver plate was lent to other exhibitions associated with Pope, including: The Iranian Institute, New York; "Exhibition of Persian Art," April 15–May 15, 1940, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD; "Iranian Art through Four Millennia," January 12–February 10, 1940, Asia Institute, New York; "Exhibition of Persian Art," December 1949–January 31, 1950, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; February 8–April 19, 1950. Letter from Gardner to Pope, dated February 28, 1938 and exhibition history notes in registration records, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

56 Letter from Pope to Gardner, dated June 13, 1940, Departmental File.

57 Ibid.



FIGURE 10.6 *Bowl, possibly from Mazanderan, Iran, second century BCE Gilded silver; 2 1/2 × 10 5/8 inches (6.3 × 27 cm). The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 35–37/2 (PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN LAMBERTON).*

Pope then added, “the record of Kansas City in the last five or ten years is certainly better than most. The proportion of money spent between the two departments is definitely sounder than some museums that have acquired almost nothing in the Near Eastern field.”⁵⁸

Pope’s fears about the lack of emphasis on Persian art in Kansas City were realized in the later twentieth century, which saw the slow transformation and dissemination of the museum’s Persian Room. Pope’s arch remained in its same, prized location until 1984, when it was deinstalled for the creation of a new suite of galleries to accommodate the museum’s growing collection

⁵⁸ Ibid.

of the South and Southeast Asian sculpture. Islamic art was moved upstairs into a third floor gallery that showcased truncated displays of art from a range of non-Western cultures. Islamic art was exhibited for another decade in this manner, until it and the remaining world culture displays were deinstalled in the 1990s to make way for offices.

However, like the marketplace, museums experience cycles and are influenced by trends. The Nelson-Atkins is no exception and the Islamic collections have again become a focus for the museum. In 2010, the Nelson-Atkins began a comprehensive survey of the Islamic ceramic collection to evaluate the works in terms of quality, condition and art historical importance.⁵⁹ Key works underwent treatment by conservators and the great mosaic arch spent a year in conservation, in preparation for the Nelson-Atkins exhibition *Echoes: Islamic Art and Contemporary Artists*, August 31, 2013–April 27, 2014, where it framed the entrance into the special exhibition space (fig. 10.7).⁶⁰

The world has also changed since the Nelson Gallery opened in 1933 and visitors in 2013 likely have an entirely different understanding of Islamic art and culture than their predecessors. They may not have grown up in homes decorated with oriental rugs and textiles, as was the taste in the early twentieth century. For some new audiences, their only points of reference for interpreting Islamic art may be current events in the Middle East. For others, especially among the diaspora communities in Kansas City, the art displayed here may hit particularly close to home.

In terms of art, Kansas City was fortunate to be looking in the right place at the right time. Civic visionaries like William Rockhill Nelson recognized that a great art museum was needed in order to raise the culture and status of the city. His estate's trustees, particularly, J. C. Nichols, recognized that outstanding works from the world's prominent art producing civilizations were necessary in order to create a great museum. And at the height of the Great Depression, the Nelson trustees sought out the best examples of world art they could find. Along the way, they found Persian art and they found Arthur Upham Pope; and Kansas City's museum is better for it.

59 The Islamic ceramics survey was undertaken by conservation intern, Jiafang Liang, under the support of a Fellowship from the Kress Foundation.

60 The mosaic spandrels were conserved by Objects Conservator Paul Benson. The treatment included removing inches of plaster off of the back of the sections, securing loose fragments and mounting the sections onto aluminium panels.



FIGURE 10.7 *Mosaic Spandrels of an Arch, 33–663/1–10, as installed in Echoes: Islamic Art and Contemporary Artists at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Photograph taken during exhibition opening reception, August 29, 2013 (PHOTOGRAPH: MARK MCDONALD).*

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FIGURE 11.1 *George Hewitt Myers, by Atanas Tasev, 1960 from an original pastel by Arthur Ludwig Ratzka, 1924.*

Equivocal Position as Expert or Dealer! The Long and Contentious Relationship of George Hewitt Myers and Arthur Upham Pope

Sumru Belger Krody

The largest file in the George Hewitt Myers archives of the Textile Museum belongs to Myers's correspondence with Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969). The first letter dates from December 28, 1928, while the last was written on August 22, 1953. There is every indication in their correspondence that besides writing each other, Myers and Pope met on different occasions in New York, Washington, DC, and even in London and Paris. They also frequently talked on the phone to discuss various subjects. The most revealing piece of information to give a sense of Myers's thoughts on Pope and his activities can be found among the letters of 1928. On a small sheet of paper, in his own handwriting, Myers scribbled the following statement: "Equivocal position as expert or dealer!" Embodied within Myers's succinct description and beneath the sometimes rocky relationship between Myers and Pope was a common goal to reshape textile studies.

Ahead of His Time: The Collecting Vision of George Hewitt Myers

It is imperative to know about George Hewitt Myers (1875–1957) (fig. 11.1) as a collector in order to understand the relationship he had with Arthur Upham Pope. When Myers first purchased a few rugs in the 1890s, he had no plans to collect several thousand textiles or eventually to establish the Textile Museum in Washington, DC.¹ Late nineteenth-century Turkish and Caucasian village carpets featuring geometric designs and strong colors were the first group of textiles Myers bought. As the years passed and his finances allowed, his interests spread to other types of non-Western textiles and textiles from earlier

1 The Textile Museum was incorporated in Washington, DC, on June 1, 1925. For further information about the history of the Museum, see Krody 2007. Although it has been recently renamed the George Washington University Museum and the Textile Museum, I use the founding name 'Textile Museum' in this chapter.

periods. He began collecting classical silk textiles and carpets from the court workshops of Safavid Iran, Ottoman Turkey, and Mughal India, early Islamic textiles, including inscribed textiles called *tiraz* from western Asia, Egypt, and Yemen, late antique textiles from Egypt, Indian resist-dyed cotton fabrics found in Fustat, Egypt, and archaeological textiles from Peru, as well as some colonial and later pieces from South and Central America.

By the late 1930s, the breadth and depth of Myers's textile collection rendered it internationally significant. At this point, his interest naturally turned to the question of the meaning of these objects, and he set out to widen the scope of existing knowledge on textiles. Myers's original attraction to textiles sprang from the fact that they tended to be judged on their own intrinsic merits rather than on the name or reputation of an artist. Especially in the case of non-Western textiles, Myers believed that the anonymous artists who produced the textiles he collected had inherited an unexplained genius for color. In addition, these makers exhibited patience and a willingness to take pains with their work. Myers was equally impressed by the history and longevity of this art form and found that the early weavings from non-Western cultures were unmatched both aesthetically and technically by the 'stuff' produced by European cultures.

Myers's underlying pursuit in collecting was the question of "what went before a certain piece to make it as it was."² He was intrigued by design and technique and how these changes over time were adapted by different weaving traditions or practiced independently of each other. For example, he considered embroidered textiles from the Greek Islands and Algeria to have the same design roots as the Ottoman embroidered textiles from Turkey. In turn, he saw that the designs on Ottoman embroidered textiles had the same origins as Anatolian carpets of the same age. Spanish carpets and textiles also exhibit designs that were copied from classical Anatolian carpets. In the late 1920s, Myers began collecting Peruvian textiles. The technical characteristics of these textiles reminded him of late antique textiles from Egypt.

In the early 1920s, Myers embarked on collecting more methodically. His aim was to assemble a collection that was as diverse as possible in order to build a comprehensive picture of non-Western textiles. In 1925, he orchestrated the transformation of his house into a museum and of his private collection into a public one. After this point, his focus in collecting increasingly shifted towards textiles that were historically important or technically unusual regardless of their condition. He was well aware that museums, besides being arbiters of

2 Myers 1931.

taste, were repositories of objects for further study and preservation, and he was interested in adding to the public's knowledge of textile history.

Myers came into collecting at a time when very wealthy collectors underwrote their agents' purchases in Europe with blank checks. Myers's collecting, however, reflected his more limited purchasing power. Although he was wealthy, he was not in a position to write blank checks nor was he interested in doing so. Instead, he focused his energy on the allocation of his financial resources to their best advantage.

Myers not only had a good eye, but he also educated himself. He was knowledgeable about the material he collected, and always relied on scholars and experts to help him. These qualities allowed him to be experimental in new areas of collecting and to spend less when purchasing. He often collected less-sought after textiles and textiles that were not in pristine condition but retained their historical, technical, and design significance.

Myers considered collecting to be an essentially selfish activity, and he cautioned that "a thing constantly to be guarded against is the desire to get something that nobody else has and preferably, that they can't get." He warned that collecting for rarity goes with a tendency to accept other people's opinions of what is the best and the most desired and to pay high prices for what is merely scarce rather than what really expresses one's own artistic taste. He advised new collectors to rely on their common sense as an aid to proper perspective.

The care, study, and appreciation of textiles were as important for Myers as their acquisition. He wanted people to appreciate the good craftsmanship, design, ingenuity, and beauty in textiles. He worked hard to make textiles accepted as an important component of art history and to encourage scientific research on the care and conservation of textiles. George Hewitt Myers was a passionate, meticulous, and prolific collector who amassed an internationally renowned and respected collection of textiles.

The majority of Myers's textiles were acquired through dealers based in New York, Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin, Munich, and Cairo. Some important textiles were purchased at auctions. Myers was known as a well-informed and highly intelligent buyer. He believed that "one must be firmly grounded in art and unusually independent and tenacious of opinions honestly formed, not to be utterly confused by what he sees." Some dealers developed lasting relationships with Myers that extended from the years before he established the Textile Museum to his death in 1957.

Many individuals contributed to Myers's efforts in building a comprehensive collection. He sought advice from a large network of respected scholars including curators of the Textile Museum and scholars associated with other institutions. They advised him on the technical and historical aspects of

textiles as well as on new areas of interest. In 1928, Germaine Merlange (1897–1973), who was possibly the first in-house scholar in the early days of the Textile Museum, encouraged Myers to consider archaeological textiles from Peru as worthy objects for collecting. He consulted Islamic art historians, including Rudolf Meyer Riefstahl (1880–1936), Ernst Kühnel (1882–1964), Arthur Upham Pope, and Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79), along with scholars of Peruvian textiles, first Morris De Camp Crawford (1882–1949), and later Junius Bird (1907–82). Nonetheless, Myers always reserved for himself the right to make final decisions.

The Beginnings of a Contentious Relationship

Among the scholars Myers consulted, Pope had the longest acquaintance with him. In one letter, Pope mentions the time their first interaction took place by saying:

I have known you since May 1917—34 years. It was about that time I got you a curious Samarkand rug with a red center. Since then you must have acquired, through my agency, over \$200,000 worth of material.³

Although this letter puts the date of their acquaintance as 1917, the first existing correspondence within Myers's archives mentioning Pope's name is dated to January 7, 1924. It is from Vincent Robinson & Company Limited of London, indicating that from Pope they received 35GBP for the cost of a cobalt blue inscription tile. The tile's provenance was given as the Preece Collection. Considering the many connections and interests they had in common, it is surprising that their first encounter appears to be as late as 1917 and the object mentioned is a tile, not a textile. Myers and his wife, Louise, had strong family connections in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Myers was living in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, with his young family during Pope's Oriental carpet exhibition in the galleries of Rhode Island School of Design in 1908.⁴ Oriental carpets appear to be the draw for both men. In the opening years of the new century, a very small group of people was passionate about Oriental carpets and was interested in studying their aesthetics. Pope and Myers were destined to meet at some point because of their shared interest in the subject matter.

3 See letter dated May 20, 1951, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

4 *Surveyors*, 49.

Myers and Pope were living again in close proximity to each other in the late 1910s. Myers moved his family to Washington, DC, in 1911–2. Around 1918, Pope and his wife and colleague Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977) moved to Washington, DC, for his World War I military service. Whatever the circumstances of their meeting, they shared a common passion; interestingly, their passion had been kindled similar ways. They saw the captivating beauty of Oriental carpets in those that were displayed around them as home furnishings.⁵ Their inquisitive minds wanted to know more about this art form.

The relationship between the two men appeared to be cordial and friendly during the Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets from Persia, Asia Minor, the Caucasus, Egypt and Spain organized for the Arts Club of Chicago from January 3 to February 10, 1926, and had a long lasting impact on Myers and the Textile Museum. Although Arthur Upham Pope's involvement in the initial development of the exhibition is unclear, his name appears as the author of the catalogue⁶ and was the major contact between George Hewitt Myers and the Arts Club of Chicago during the negotiations for several rugs which eventually ended up in the Textile Museum's collections and are considered a very important part of the collections today.⁷ Eventually, Myers bought twelve rugs that were in the exhibition, ten of which he purchased during the exhibition.⁸ One of the rugs he purchased was the seventeenth-century Safavid kilim (Textile Museum R33.28.1) out of the central and border designs of which Myers created his book plate (figs. 11.2 and 11.3). Purchased from Bernheimer Brothers,

5 For Pope, see *Surveyors*, 48. Myers is said to come to collecting carpets when he purchased few carpets to decorate his dorm room in Yale and later learned that the carpets he acquired were not as old or special as he hoped and his curiosity awoken to explore and figure out the reasons.

6 Kadoi 2013, 262–3.

7 Myers was interested in fourteen rugs that were in the exhibition and asked Pope for the going prices for them, see letter dated January 7, 1926, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

8 See correspondence between Myers, Pope and the Arts Club of Chicago between January 7 and March 18, 1926. Myers purchased through the Arts Club of Chicago three rugs lent by the Bernheimer Brothers (Textile Museum R33.1.2 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 2], Textile Museum R33.6.11 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 17], and Textile Museum R33.28.1 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 27]), three carpets by Demotte (Textile Museum R36.00.2 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 33], Textile Museum R16.2.1 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 52, and Textile Museum R44.3.2 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 53]), two carpets by Benguiat Brothers (Textile Museum R36.2.2 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 35], and Textile Museum R36.2.7 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 36]), one carpet by Dikran Kelekian (Textile Museum R34.18.1 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 39]), and one rug lent by Bühler and Steinmeyer (Textile Museum R34.17.3 [Pope 1926, cat. no. 41]).



FIGURE 11.2 *Safavid kilim George Hewitt Myers bought from the Arts Club of Chicago exhibition of carpets. Kilim, Safavid period, Iran, seventeenth century, silk and metallic-wrapped threads, 227 × 131 cm., Textile Museum R33.28.1, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1926.*



FIGURE 11.3

George Hewitt Myers's book plate, design inspired from the Safavid kilim he purchased in 1926 from the Arts Club of Chicago exhibition of carpets.

Myers was very particular about the kilim and he asked Pope in a letter that “it gets dirty as little as possible before it can be shipped.”⁹ Myers eventually purchased two other carpets that were in the exhibition in 1926 and in 1951.¹⁰

After few years of acquaintance and the satisfactory conclusion of the Arts Club of Chicago exhibition and exchange, George Hewitt Myers, as the President of the brand new Textile Museum, invited Arthur Upham Pope to join the Board of the Museum in a letter dated December 13, 1928. Pope accepted the position. With Charles R. Richards of General Education Board, Alexander Wetmore of Smithsonian Institute, and Theodore Sizer of School of Fine Arts, Yale University, Pope became a trustee of the then three-year old Textile Museum. Pope's expertise on historical aspects of Iranian textiles including carpets, his eye for beauty, and Phyllis Ackerman's knowledge of the technical aspect of Iranian textiles were invaluable for Myers.

9 See letter dated January 7, 1926, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

10 Textile Museum R33.4.11 from Demotte in June 1926 (Pope 1926, cat. no. 12), and Textile Museum R33.4.6 from the estate of Dikran Kelekian in 1951 (Pope 1926, cat. no. 10).

Pope's new position as a Trustee of the Textile Museum was a short-lived one. By March 1931, Pope resigned from his position after a bitter disagreement with Myers over the purchase of textiles for the Museum's collections.¹¹ Pope was one of the scholars Myers consulted when considering adding Islamic, especially Persian, art to his expanding collection, but Pope also sold textiles to Myers. Although some of those textiles appear to have come from his and Ackerman's collection, for the most part, Pope played the role of representative for various sellers, but, as their correspondence indicates, he took commission from Myers, the buyer, as well.

By late 1930s, Myers was inquiring about Pope's "programme of acquisition in museum service." Pope's response to Myers came in a four-page letter dated January 30, 1931, explaining that the type of 'commissions' he had received were not comparable with the 'commissions' of a dealer or an auction house. Pope wrote:

A 10% commission (and 15% commission for work actually executed in Persia) might seem to need justification in view of the fact that a firm like Spink only charges 7 1/2% commission. I think their commission is a little misleading as it does not include expenses. For instance, for the expertise for the Portuguese carpet I was paid by Lord Sackville, and I understand that other expenses are borne by the seller. My charges for commission cover my own expenses, saving on exceptional occasions and by special arrangement.

He then enumerates the advantages for working with him instead of a dealer or auction house. Pope always worked hard to secure a lowest possible price compare to an auction house whose main concern had been to secure the highest price. He was able to do this because he could buy in Iran from Persian sources, cheaper than any foreigner or any European dealer could; this was thanks to the network of people whom he cultivated over the years in Iran by establishing goodwill, giving information or directing advantageous piece to certain dealers, lending money, giving favors, providing various services, without asking commission from the Persian dealers. In return for his services, this network of people returned the favors by providing him with information and lower prices. The second part of his service covered by his commission was supplying information and accounts of the pieces, which was valuable to the majority of buyers, though not so much to Myers. Pope was also very care-

11 See letter dated March 6, 1931, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

ful about the fakes as he wrote in the letter: “[he is] making systematic and so far rather successful campaign against falsification.” Finally, his ‘intelligence service’ had given him advance information about pieces and he often had gotten exclusive options, although he never abused this privilege by tying up any piece so that no one would have had a chance to buy except through him, therefore giving him the commission.

Myers’s response to Pope was in a letter dated February 12, 1931, which included an article published in the *New York Times* about the objections raised about the authenticity of some of the objects in the Persian Art exhibition.¹² This article also contained a statement that irked Myers considerably:

Denial also was made of the report published in London yesterday that Professor Arthur Upham Pope, chief organizer of the exhibition, buys for American museums on a commission basis. Professor Pope, it was stated, is retained as an adviser by American museums and when making purchases with specific sums entrusted to him receives his remuneration at a rate fixed in advance by persons for whom he buys and not from any other source.

Myers was quick to write back to Pope saying, after citing the above statement from the newspaper, “this is entirely Greek to me since, so far as I know, it is absolutely true that you buy on a commission basis and I, therefore, can’t understand the authority for the denial of that fact.”

Rift Opens in the Friendship

Myers’s relationship with Pope appears to have been always troubled. This is surprising considering that their surviving correspondence spans twenty-five years and their acquaintance more than that.¹³ The first visible cracks in the relationship appeared as early as in 1929, when Myers acquired a very large Chinese/Mongolian carpet at great expense, sight-unseen and found out upon

12 Article was clipped from the *New York Times*, February 8, 1931, entitled “Two American Critics Withdrawn Objections to London Exhibits.”

13 Letter from Pope dated to June 22, 1931, mentions Pope’s service to Myers and the Museum for ten years, putting the first connection related to the collection development to around 1921. Another letter from Pope dating to May 20, 1951, puts the date of the first meeting to May 1917, see note 3 above.

its arrival in December 1928 that he disliked the carpet, taking particular issue with its condition but also questioning its provenance. Initially Pope had convinced Myers to acquire this huge carpet he found in Berlin for \$15,000. It was said to be the oldest Chinese rug in existence—possibly fourteenth century—and perhaps the biggest at 18 feet by 26 feet. Pope said it had been a gift from the Ottoman court to the German ambassador to Turkey in the 1800s, and that it was probably from Mongolia. Almost immediately after the carpet's arrival to Washington, DC, Myers requested that Pope resell the carpet or reimburse him for it. From that moment on, for the following twenty-five years, every letter Myers sent to Pope included a sentence about the Chinese/Mongolian carpet and asked when Pope was planning to dispose of it. In response, Pope always eloquently and clearly expressed to Myers various reasons for not being able to dispose of the carpet. Finally in 1953, the carpet was disposed of by Myers's efforts rather than Pope's.¹⁴

In 1931, in the immediate aftermath of the Chinese/Mongolian carpet debacle, we find Pope trying to convince Myers to purchase another large carpet; this one was the only Ardabil carpet in private hands at the time. Myers's response was straightforward: he was not interested.¹⁵ The decision might have been because of the earlier Chinese/Mongolian carpet purchase or because the asking price was too high for Myers during the height of Great Depression. There was no other mention of the Ardabil carpet until eleven years later in a letter written by Pope, in the context of trying to convince Myers to purchase an early inscribed Iranian textile:

The results are quite extraordinary. We have the name of the weaver and the date and the name of the town where it was woven, which is not easy to identify but it is a name used on the inscription of an early Seljuq monument in Isfahan and it is probably the name of one of the oldest districts there. This will, of course, make it function for all Persian textiles as the Ardabil carpet did for so many years for Persian students. It will be the basic document on which all theories of the development of textile art in medieval Persia must rest. . . . This is the last and most important

14 I would like to thank Sheridan Collins of Washington, DC for generously providing access to her earlier research on the subject of Chinese/Mongolian carpet.

15 See letter dated February 12, 1931, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC. For a brief history of the LACMA portion of the Ardabil carpet, see also Farnham 2001.

piece that came out of the Seljuq tombs. I don't believe we will ever see anything more again.¹⁶

The entry in the Textile Museum register indicates a tomb cover purchased by Myers from Pope in November 1942; undeniably the piece is the one Pope mentions in his letter.¹⁷

Myers was always suspicious about Pope and argued that Pope had been presenting for Myers's inspection objects that were over-priced and "entirely unsuited to TM." Myers believed that he could acquire the same type of pieces less expensively, which he often did. He also was frustrated by Pope's inaccuracy in describing them and their condition to him. Pope was a master in explaining the historical importance he saw in these textiles regardless of their condition. He was also very good, with Phyllis's often unrecognized and unappreciated knowledge, at giving strong arguments using technical and structural characteristics of the textiles to support his proposed provenance and dating. Despite his continued complaining, Myers also continued to acquire through Pope.

The second biggest disagreement between Myers and Pope occurred in the mid-1930s. Pope was consulting Ada Small Moore (1859–1955) on developing her collection of early Persian textiles. She eventually decided to donate them to the Yale University Gallery with several conditions attached. Two issues related to this transaction appeared to cause the rift. Pope was consulting with Myers on similar types of objects at the same time that he was consulting with Mrs. Moore. One can detect from the correspondence that Myers wanted exclusive access to the material and did not want the Textile Museum's collection seen as supplementing Mrs. Moore's. Pope's response was very diplomatic, as expected from him:

... these two collections complement each other in a truly remarkable way, and if the examples from both could be shown in one exhibition, it would be a real contribution to the understanding of the art and of greatest value to designers and serious students of which there are many coming to the Exhibition.¹⁸

16 See letter dated August 25, 1942, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

17 The Textile Museum accession number 3.230A and B.

18 See letter dated April 4, 1940, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

Also, Myers might have felt that Pope and Ackerman were “intruding on the administration” of the museum at the Yale University and trying “improperly to influence its decisions, and in general interfering.” It appears that the donation was never discussed directly with Myers, which seems odd considering that he was Honorary Curator of Textiles at the Yale University Gallery.¹⁹ In a letter dated April 8, 1940, Myers wrote “I have read your letters of 4th and 5th April and admit there is something in what you say, aside from the compliments.” Then he continued to enumerate his discontent with Pope by saying that he has no jealousy of the Moore collection, his worry was actually:

Turning over to you and Phyllis the best Persian material we have I feel no assurance that it will be treated on its merits as to description and location as compared with the Moore collection and the property of some dealers. This is because of your closer association in recent years with these others than with the Textile Museum.

Myers then mentioned that Pope concealed the facts about Myers’s purchase of the Mongolian carpet in 1928–9 and that the carpet had not yet been disposed of. Myers was also “far from satisfied about” Pope’s action in connection with the Moore gift when he knew quite well that Myers was Honorary Curator of Textiles at the Yale University Gallery and that he was not involved in the decision to acquire the pieces for the Yale collection. The letter concludes with Myers asking Pope to answer specific questions that he included in the letter about the Textile Museum lending objects to the exhibition Pope was organizing at the Iranian Institute in New York. Disagreeing vehemently but moving on with business as usual was the pattern Myers and Pope seemed to follow throughout their relationship. It appears over and over again in their correspondence.

Myers, Pope, and Ackerman

Myers began collecting Persian textiles in the August of 1926. He continued to acquire them through the 1950s at a rather steady pace. His first purchase of an eleventh or twelfth century textile was in 1927. Undeniably, Pope with Ackerman had a hand in encouraging Myers to branch out and consider

19 See letter dated December 14, 1929 (George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.), beginning from July 1, 1929, for three year term (to July 1, 1932) at the Yale University Gallery.

archaeological textiles from Iran as worthy objects for collecting as well as Safavid textiles of later periods. Myers continued to purchase several more throughout the 1930s and 1940s including a significant grouping in October 1930 from Pope and in October 1931 from Nazare Aga. His last purchase of this type of early Iranian textiles was a group of silk fragments in February 1950.

Myers relied not only on Pope's knowledge of Persian art, but also may have trusted Pope's aesthetics choices when selecting objects for the growing collection of the Textile Museum, particularly considering Pope's expertise in studies of aesthetics. Reading their correspondence, one comes to the conclusion that both Myers and Pope had strong opinions on issues and often conflicting points of views. They were not shy about expressing them to each other and, if the accusations in the letters are to be believed, to others as well. In Myers's case the letters were brief and to the point, and sometimes can be considered even terse. As Richard Ettinghausen recalled after Myers's death "He [Myers] sometimes became a little gruff, everybody realized it as a part of his direct and forthright manner."²⁰ In Pope's letters, on the other hand, one sees his command of the language, his sharp logic, and eloquent and clear delivery of his arguments. He was very diplomatic. The love of textile arts, the beauty of Persian textiles and thrill of the hunt for art objects were what appear to connect these two strong characters.

Pope may be considered one of the forces molding Myers as a great collector of textile arts, although it might have been unintentional. Very early on Myers established for himself several ground rules in collecting such as not buying anything without seeing it, not paying the asking price upfront without questioning, not buying because something is rare, and not trusting fully the advice given by dealers and scholars. If not all, some of these rules were probably established due to his experiences while working with Pope. Myers had never fully trusted anyone from whom he was acquiring textiles and Pope expected full trust from the people he advised. Pope, however, appeared to have an uncanny ability to make Myers feel that the collection he was building for the Textile Museum was one of the best in the world, especially in terms of early Persian textiles, the development of which Pope supported.

Authenticity concerns about the early Iranian silks and some Safavid silks bought from Pope and Ackerman throughout the 1930s and 1940s created a point of contention among Myers, Pope, and Ackerman. Myers and others bought a considerable number of early Iranian textiles some of which were

20 See recollections compiled by Lukens (typewritten manuscript) in the Textile Museum Arthur D. Jenkins Library.

provenanced to the Bibi Shahr Banu complex near Tehran.²¹ The Textile Museum curators Florence Day (b. 1908) and Louisa Bellinger (d. 1968) raised concerns about structures they found in these textiles. They felt the textile structures and available weaving technology at the time of production did not correspond as neatly as Phyllis Ackerman suggested. Many others also raised similar authenticity concerns based on their research interests.²² The concerns about the dating of the textiles and their provenance caused Myers to re-evaluate how much he trusted Phyllis Ackerman's judgment on textile structures and dating. Initially, Pope and Ackerman approached the concerns in a very levelheaded way. In a letter written in 1936, Pope asks permission for Phyllis to discuss the subject directly with Myers, saying:

Someone recently quoted you as saying, in Brooklyn, that you didn't always agree with Phyllis' dating of Persian textiles. She would be interested to know on what pieces you and she have any difference of opinion. She has great respect for your views on such matters and has often said that you knew more than most of the museum experts put together and then, multiply by some.²³

Myers's response was uncharacteristically placid:

I do not know what was the origin of any remark I may have made about disagreeing with Phyllis' dating of Persian textiles. Of course, I do not pretend to have anything but an empirical and casual knowledge of accurate dating of such things and I am surprised that anyone could quote such a statement by me. As you know, there is usually some change in any remark that passes thru several hands even though the people who quote it are entirely honest and intend to be accurate.²⁴

21 See Méthé and Krody 2007, Blair, Bloom, and Wardwell 1992, and letters between 1935 and 1950s for more information about Bibi Shahr Banu textiles.

22 See letter from Phyllis Ackerman to Myers dated to April 30, 1935, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC. She connects "these malicious rumors all to Pope's increasing success in the field and increasing power of the Institute that people cannot stand it."

23 See letter dated March 7, 1936, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

24 See letter dated March 11, 1936, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC. After Myers's letter this issue appears to resolve via phone conversation or both parties appeared to back off and forget about it. The next letter in the archives is from Phyllis Ackerman to Myers and dated to April 15, 1936. She apologizes for not being

Pope was an early advocate for technical analysis, especially for carpets. He believed technical analysis could be used in aiding provenience and dating of textiles, especially considering Phyllis Ackerman's work on that subject. This idea paralleled Myers's ideas very closely. In one of his letters to Myers, Pope mentions that although textile analysis is becoming more standard, carpet analysis seems to be lagging behind:

No two people see the same facts the same way, and when it comes to representing them, there are serious discrepancies. The Institute and the Haji [*sic*] Baba Club are now making a combined effort to remedy this situation and to set out the principal types of Persian carpet weaving in a new and, I hope, definitive manner.

Pope felt the best person for the job was Mr. Amos Thatcher, and he added:

He not only brings to all the problems a first-class historical sense and a very clear and analytical mind, but an actual practical expertness in weaving that would be hard to duplicate.... Day time he is Traffic Manager for the Telephone Company in Brooklyn!—an amusing commentary and a very creditable one, on American life.²⁵

Myers's ultimate goals for collecting textiles and establishing the Textiles Museum were to encourage the study of textiles as a scientific field and to make textiles a part of art historical discourse. Pope's and Ackerman's advocacy of textiles and their desire to include textiles as part of the art historical survey of cultures probably appealed to Myers more than any other scholars' approach.

The Last Correspondence

The last letter from Pope to Myers in the Textile Museum's archives is dated August 22, 1953, and appears never to have been answered by Myers. Compared to the rocky relationship and harsh language of earlier decades, the letter is

able to come to Washington, DC, due to her health, before they (Pope and Ackerman) set sail to Europe. She moves to discuss a group of textiles she is researching and discusses her attribution of them to Antioch.

25 See letter dated March 29, 1938, George Hewitt Myers Archives, Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

quite ordinary. It mentions Phyllis Ackerman's hesitance about sending an article published in CIBA which includes an image of one of Myers's pieces. Phyllis apparently sent the image to CIBA without Myers's permission. Myers had been always very adamant about knowing where and in which context his and the Textile Museum's artworks were published. This requirement was initially established quite early in their correspondence that took place when Pope and Ackerman were beginning their work on *A Survey of Persian Art*.²⁶

But the most poignant sentiment from the last decade of the correspondence appears in a letter written by Pope to Myers on October 24, 1952, right after the Chinese/Mongolian carpet was sold to John J. Emery of Cincinnati, Ohio. Pope ends his letter by saying:

Unless I am mistaken, neither of us is around here for long. I have served you to the utmost of my ability for a period of now more than thirty-five years. I have served you with sincerity and there has never been any transaction that I know of that you yourself have been dissatisfied with although I know other people have continuously plied you with disparaging suggestions. Can't we, in the time that is left, keep on the level we had for many years? I am no doubt a very disagreeable person, but I am at least honest and moderately intelligent and I have one final transaction that I am attempting which can be of very great interest to you and which I believe you would warmly approve. It is very much in the interest of those who care for the beauty of oriental carpets.

Pope's excellent gift of eloquence and rhetorical skills were the opposite of Myers's gruff and forthright manner, but both men appeared to understand the value of each other's contribution to the process of making textiles, especially carpets, part of the art historical discourse and 'endured' each other's company for more than a quarter of a century. There is of course the possibility that they actually enjoyed, and thrived, in their friendship full of conflicts.

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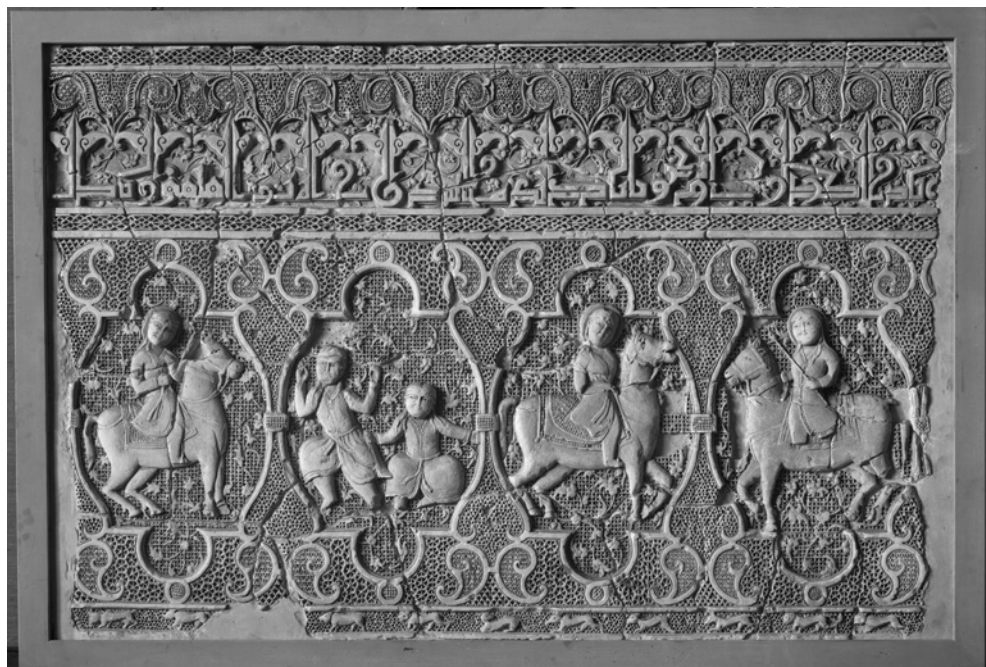


FIGURE 12.1 *Stucco panel. Iran, probably twelfth-thirteenth century with later restoration. 116 × 178 cm (45 11/16 × 70 1/16 in.). Maria Antoinette Evans Fund, deaccessioned (PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).*

My Dear Holmes: Arthur Upham Pope and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Laura Weinstein

During the 1920s and 30s, Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) was in nearly constant contact with the directors of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), though his most active involvement came between 1930 and 1934. In this time, Pope and his wife, Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977), served as ‘buyers’ agents,’ helping to bring approximately 200 objects into the collection of ‘Mohammedan’ art.¹ Though this seems at first to be a substantial contribution, Pope’s long-term impact on the Museum is in fact hard to discern. For although he undoubtedly ushered in a major transformation in the way Persian art was perceived and collected in the West, his efforts to advance appreciation of this material at the MFA were more persistent than fruitful. Despite the advantages of a close relationship with the Director and a philosophical kinship with the curator of ‘Mohammedan’ art, Pope remained an outsider, never establishing a firm platform from which to advance Persian art and his own reputation.

Unlike his role at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, where he was involved in curating exhibitions and installing galleries, Pope’s work at the MFA was limited to acquisitions.² He began approaching the MFA with objects for sale in the early 1920s, at first with no particular area of specialization. In 1922 he wrote with thinly veiled frustration to several ‘gentlemen’ of the MFA professing astonishment by “your various communications declining with thanks Rembrandts, Michael Angelos, Flemish Primitives, Persian faience, Mesopotamian metal work, and Indian embroideries . . .”³ This

1 This material was held within the Department of Chinese and Japanese art, today the Department of the Art of Asia, Oceania and Africa.

2 For Pope’s time at the Art Institute, see Kadoi 2010; Kadoi 2012. As of 2015 there is not yet a published source for Pope’s work at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, but research on this subject by Yael Rice is ongoing.

3 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to unnamed MFA ‘gentlemen’, May 24, 1922. This and all letters cited below are in the archives of the MFA, with the exception of those listed as coming from Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Papers.



FIGURE 12.2 *Equine head ornament, axe head, handle. Iran (Luristan), tenth-fourth century BC. Maria Antoinette Evans Fund, 30.583, 30.559 and 30.570 (PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).*

situation seems to have continued for some time as it was not until 1930 that the MFA first purchased an object that was brought to their attention through Pope.⁴ This was a large stucco panel—part of a frieze associated with the site of Saveh, in northern-central Iran—purchased on Pope's recommendation from Stora Frères in 1930 for \$12,000 (fig. 12.1).⁵ As it was purchased on Pope's 'option' and at a price that he negotiated, he was paid a commission of 15% (\$1,800).

This stucco would soon become an object of contention, which will be further discussed below, but before the difficulties came to a head several more projects were undertaken in collaboration with Pope. First, the MFA authorized him to purchase on their behalf a selection of ancient bronze objects that were just beginning to be excavated in large quantities from burial grounds in

4 Prior to this Pope made a gift of a 'Garrus ware bowl' (accession number 30.414).

5 Accession number 30.473. See Coomaraswamy 1930, 104–7. It was eventually returned to Rafael Stora and an Achaemenid relief from Persepolis was provided in exchange (39.586).

Luristan, a province in western Iran.⁶ By August of 1930 a group of ninety-five bronzes had been accessioned, having been purchased for \$15,000, plus a \$2,250 commission (fig. 12.2).⁷ Small and exquisitely formed, with appealing figural decoration and beautiful patinas, these bronzes were a popular addition to the collection, and they received special notice in the Museum's Annual Report of 1930, where they were described as a "good, representative collection."⁸ Many were exhibited in 1931 at Burlington House and subsequently published in *A Survey of Persian Art*. The Luristan bronzes were to be the only major acquisition the MFA made directly through Pope that would stand the test of time.

This acquisition must have been a major coup for Pope and Ackerman. A telegram on May 24, 1930, had proudly announced "Reserving finest group Persoscyth[ian] Bronzes Boston Suprior [*sic*] any available."⁹ And yet, even while engaged with various individuals at the Museum in giddy correspondence over these newfound treasures, Pope found it necessary to explain and even defend the role he was playing vis-à-vis the Museum. Writing to Edward Jackson Holmes (1873–1950; director of the MFA from 1925 to 1934) in July of 1930, he asserted that his role was that of "a professional buyer" or "buyer's agent," a position he saw as uncompromised by self interest and committed solely to the "advancement of knowledge and appreciation" of Persian art.¹⁰ This was just the first of numerous letters in which Pope attempted to clarify his professional practices and argue for their propriety.¹¹ Despite his eloquence and skilled argumentation, Pope's simultaneous occupation of the role of scholar, curator and art dealer led to prolonged confusion and to a certain degree of mistrust.

In addition to Edward Jackson Holmes, Pope was in contact with Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1887–1947) throughout this period; their letters suggest a respectful, if not affectionate, relationship. Coomaraswamy, a preeminent scholar of South Asian artistic traditions, had come to the MFA in 1917 to be

6 De Waele 1982; Vanden Berghe and Langerart-Seeuws 1982.

7 Accession numbers 30.544–634.

8 Annual Report (1930), 77–78.

9 Telegram from Arthur Upham Pope to Edward Jackson Holmes, May 24, 1930.

10 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Edward Jackson Holmes, July 18, 1930. Although Pope claimed to represent buyers and not dealers, evidence from his own correspondence demonstrates that he did at times act as a dealer's agent. The Luristan bronzes were one such occasion. Watson 2013, 68.

11 In 1932 Pope would write to Holmes asking that in the future he be paid a "professional fee" rather than a "commission," on the grounds that this would put him in the "position of any university professor or other expert who may be called upon for counsel or service." Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Edward Jackson Holmes, February 2, 1932.

the first Keeper of Indian Art in an American museum.¹² In 1922 his title was changed to Keeper of Indian and Mohammedan Art, partly as a result of the movement of Indian and Islamic art out of the Western art department and into a department devoted to Asian art.¹³ In 1931 his title changed once again, to Fellow for Research in Indian, Persian, and Mohammedan Art, reflecting his greater interest in research and writing than in curation at that stage in his career.¹⁴ He continued in this position until his death in 1947.

In a letter from June of 1930 (just before the last shift in Coomaraswamy's title and responsibilities at the MFA), Pope urged him to consider acquiring Persian objects "other than manuscripts."¹⁵ This was perhaps a response to the purchase in 1929 of a substantial group of Persian manuscripts, paintings and calligraphy from Elizabeth Riefstahl Titzel (1889–1986), wife of the Islamic art dealer Rudolf A. Meyer Riefstahl (1880–1936) and a scholar of Islamic art in her own right (these manuscripts added to the MFA's already considerable collection of Persian and Mughal paintings, established through Denman Waldo Ross and the purchase of the collection of Victor Goloubew (1878–1945) in the early twentieth century). With his typical intensity, Pope urged quick action and asserted that "the house is, as it were, on fire,"¹⁶ but it is not clear that Coomaraswamy, who would spend the 1930s focused more on publications than on acquisitions, shared his sense of urgency.¹⁷

Pope found a more willing partner in Holmes (fig. 12.3). A graduate of Harvard and grandson of poet Oliver Wendell Holmes, Holmes had been active at the MFA since becoming the chairman of the committee for the Department of Chinese and Japanese art in 1907, at the age of 34.¹⁸ Involved with the Museum for nearly fifty years, he served as Director, President and Trustee, among other roles. In many ways, Holmes was a transitional figure for the Museum. He shared with an older generation of museum benefactors (e.g. Martin Brimmer [1829–96]; George Washington Wales [1815–96]; and

12 For a biography of Coomaraswamy, see Lipsey 1977.

13 The evolution of the MFA's Islamic collection in the years leading up to era of Pope and Holmes is discussed (in relation to other Boston-based collections) in Cuddon 2013.

14 Whitehill 1970, 370.

15 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, June 7, 1930.

16 Ibid.

17 His response: "I have stressed the importance of the opportunities and the whole question will be further considered. Personally I am interested (1) in the prehistoric (2) in a large faience." Letter from Ananda K. Coomaraswamy to Arthur Upham Pope, June 7, 1930, Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Papers.

18 Whitehill 1970, 131–2.



FIGURE 12.3 *Edward Jackson Holmes (front row, center) with colleagues, 1928. Back row, left to right: Henry Preston Rossiter (Prints); Dows Dunham (Egyptian); Lacey Davis Caskey (Classical); Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (Keeper of Indian, Persian, and Muhammadan Art); Edwin James Hipkiss (Decorative Arts); and Hanford Lyman Story (Registrar). Front row, left to right: Kojiro Tomita (Keeper of Japanese Art); Charles Henry Hawes (Associate Director); Edward Jackson Holmes (Director, later President of Board of Trustees); John Briggs Potter (Advisor to the Department/Keeper of Paintings); Ashton Sanborn (Secretary of the Museum) (PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).*

Denman Waldo Ross [1853–1935]) a taste for travel in Europe and Asia and a desire to see the Museum build up comprehensive collections of Asian art. But he was young enough to appreciate the shift the institution had made beginning around 1900 towards ‘fine’ rather than ‘applied’ arts.

The relationship between Pope and Holmes, which seems to have solidified into a friendship by 1930, was to last until the latter’s death in 1950. Over time, the correspondence between “Mr. Pope” and “Mr. Holmes” gave way to letters between “Arthur” and “Ned.” Pope’s affection for his friend in Boston is evident in many letters addressed to “My Dear Holmes.” There is no doubt that Holmes was Pope’s main link with the MFA and his strongest supporter. The acquisition of the stucco panel and Luristan bronzes were made with Holmes’ support, and it was presumably at his urging that Pope submitted (in July of

1930) an ambitious document entitled "Outline of the Materials Needed for a Complete and Systematic Collection of Persian and Medieval Near Eastern Art." The information the "Outline" contained, which Pope requested be kept confidential, covered all of the types of objects one might desire for such a collection as well as the mechanism by which each could be acquired (excavation, purchase from dealer, purchase from private collection, exchange, etc.).

If the Luristan bronzes had been the first step, then by the fall of 1931, Pope and Holmes had taken several more steps towards the building of this "Complete and Systematic Collection." Sixty pieces of Persian pottery were accessioned in September of that year, to be followed by thirty more in December.¹⁹ The undertaking of an excavation in Iran was under discussion as a mechanism by which to greatly increase the breadth of the collection, as was the acquisition of carpets and other objects. The acquisition of a superbly carved twelfth-century tombstone from Yazd (acquired through Phyllis Ackerman) suggests that momentum may have been building.²⁰

But just how to construct the collection and what kind of collection it ought to be was not agreed upon by all parties involved. Coomaraswamy was critical of the quality of the first batch of Persian pottery (fig. 12.4). Pope responded to the complaints in a letter of October 1931 in which he urged Coomaraswamy to withhold judgment till all of the pieces had arrived, complaining that he hadn't known that the MFA wanted "conspicuous and handsome pieces" rather than a systematic collection of varied shapes, glazes, and types of decoration. Pulling no punches, he claimed that the former reflected a "dilettante's point of view" while the latter made for a "real collection."

As much as Pope (and perhaps Holmes) did not like it, the preference for a few high quality pieces over a larger number of middling ones had been central to the MFA's approach to collecting for nearly three decades. A typical reflection of this approach can be found in the comments of Arthur Fairbanks (1864–1944), director of the Museum from 1907 to 1925, in the Annual Report for 1924: "the effort to increase the collections" had become "an effort to raise the standard of the collections by adding fewer and fewer objects, and only those of high quality."²¹ It is little surprise, then, that the Annual Report of 1931 makes mention of the Yazd tombstone but not of the Persian pottery.²²

By the time the second batch of Persian ceramics had been accessioned, concerns about the stucco panel were coming to light. Although he responded

19 Accession numbers 31.712–772 and 31.920–31.949.

20 Accession number 31.711. Ağa-Oğlu 1933.

21 Annual Report (1924), 85.

22 Annual Report (1931), 77.



FIGURE 12.4 *Star tile with horse. Iran, 1310. 20.5 × 1.3 cm (8 1/16 × 1/2 in.). Maria Antoinette Evans Fund and funds donated by Edward Jackson Holmes, 31.29*
(PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).

quickly and firmly to intimations of doubt, Pope was unable to stem a rising tide of questions about the panel and it was determined that scientific and art historical studies were necessary.²³ This was a long process, as both in-house and outside specialists were consulted. By May of 1935 a series of analyses had been carried out and the decision had been made not to allow it to be published in the *Survey of Persian Art* on the basis of substantial doubts about its

23 Similar studies (using a range of scientific techniques) were carried out in museums across America and Europe in this period in order to address questions about objects acquired both through Pope and other dealers/agents. For Pope in particular, see Overton 2012, 81. For broader discussions of the authenticity of Islamic objects, see Watson 2004; Norman 2004; Watson 2013.

authenticity. Coomaraswamy wrote to Pope with this news²⁴ and Ackerman responded, not to him but rather to the Museum's new director (George Harold Edgell [1887–1954]; director from 1934 to 1954) since, as she explained disingenuously, she did not “find any Curator of Islamic Art listed in your April 1935 Bulletin.”²⁵ After protracted negotiations with Edgell, the stucco was in fact allowed to be reproduced in the *Survey* provided that a note was included in the preface specifying that MFA did not take “responsibility for endorsing the authenticity of the object.”²⁶ Doubts about the piece were never alleviated and it was de-accessioned on April 20, 1939.²⁷

Tension between Coomaraswamy and Pope appears to have cropped up several other times in this period. One anecdote offers some insight into the nature of the discord. Early in 1933 Pope had been invited to present a lecture at the MFA and he wrote to Charles Hawes (1867–1943), Associate Director of the MFA, about the selection of a topic. His preference, purportedly on account of the sophistication of Bostonians vis-à-vis India, was to discuss “Newly Discovered Relations between the Architecture of India and Persia.” But, Pope asked Hawes, would this subject bore Coomaraswamy, who was “indisputably the most learned man” in this field?²⁸ In a subsequent letter he went so far as to suggest that Coomaraswamy “ought to be sent out of town for over the lecture.”²⁹

A combination of respect and rivalry seems likely to have motivated this proposal. In the lecture itself, Pope argued that the architects of India and Persia had made truly great contributions to world architecture, but in quite distinct ways: “one [India] proposing and inspiring, the other [Persia] in a certain degree realising and disposing.”³⁰ While this manner of describing the accomplishments of Persian and Indian artists in some respects favors the former over the latter, one can also detect in the lecture's content some degree of

24 Letter from Ananda K. Coomaraswamy to Arthur Upham Pope, April 17, 1935, Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Papers.

25 Letter from Phyllis Ackerman to George H. Edgell, May 1, 1935.

26 Letter from George H. Edgell to Arthur Upham Pope, June 26, 1935.

27 The panel's current location is unknown. There are two other large stucco panels associated with this one. One is in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1929-60-1). The other, also with Stora provenance, is now in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha (SW.160) and is the subject of an ongoing study by Leslee Michelsen. For a treatment of the Doha panel, see Hillenbrand 2010.

28 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Charles Hawes, January 31, 1933.

29 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Charles Hawes, March 14, 1933.

30 Report on lecture, MFA Director's correspondence with Arthur Upham Pope, 1933.

indebtedness to Coomaraswamy's own work, which often emphasized the myths and ideas that shaped Indian art, arguing that it is only within these that one can find the true significance of works of Indian art.³¹ Kishwar Rizvi has identified further indications of indebtedness to Coomaraswamy's work in Pope's notion that a "Sufi (mystical) spirit" pervaded Persian art,³² and correspondence between the two scholars after the publication of Pope's *Introduction to Persian Art Since the Seventh Century AD* reflects a common interest in the "idea content" of works of art.³³ Despite these areas of sympathy, Coomaraswamy would likely have been critical of the lecture, had he been permitted to attend.

Despite these awkward episodes, Coomaraswamy was Pope's supporter in print, where one might say it mattered most. In 1941 Meyer Schapiro (1904–96) published a critical review of the *Survey of Persian Art* in the *Art Bulletin*, objecting to (among other things) the presentation of Persian art as the expression of a unified and unchanging "Persian spirit" rather than as the product of stylistic development over time in response to changing ideas and contexts.³⁴ Coomaraswamy published a rebuttal three months later, contesting Schapiro's notion that style is a matter of aesthetic development, its evolution directed by artistic and historical forces.³⁵ He instead presented style as a direct outgrowth of the 'mind' of a given people: "style reveals essence."

Although Coomaraswamy acknowledged that the *Survey* was imperfect, he defended it, and it is tempting to see in his support an acknowledgement that he and Pope were engaged in a similar intellectual endeavor: to study, explain and promote the art of a society in the service of an emerging national identity.³⁶ Indeed, in an address given at the Near Eastern Culture and Society Bicentennial Conference at Princeton University in 1947, Coomaraswamy laid out his own approach to Persian art, emphasizing the theological and metaphysical concepts that he believed undergirded it, and suggesting that it was

31 This aspect of Coomaraswamy's thinking is discussed in Lipsey 1977, vol. 3, 161–75.

32 Kishwar Rizvi has suggested that Coomaraswamy was a major supporter of Pope, citing Coomaraswamy's *Art Bulletin* publication and his participation in the First International Congress for Persian Art and Archaeology. Rizvi 2007, 48, 58.

33 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, October 27, 1931, Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Papers.

34 Schapiro 1941.

35 Coomaraswamy 1941, 173.

36 The role played by Pope in the Pahlavi regime's construction of an Iranian national ideology is explored in Rizvi 2007; Overton 2012.

these one needed to grasp “if the Persian or, indeed, any other traditional art is to be understood.”³⁷

Throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, efforts to initiate an archaeological excavation in Iran were ongoing. As early as 1925 Pope had been in correspondence with Charles Hawes, urging the MFA to undertake a dig in Iran, and his letters to Holmes often touched on that topic as well. In the early 1930s, Pope was finally able to bring Holmes together with the archaeologist Erich Schmidt (1897–1964) and Horace Jayne (1898–1975) of the University Museum of Pennsylvania to discuss a collaborative excavation. Pope offered the assistance of the American Institute of Persian Art and Archaeology in organizing the dig and the utilization of their close relations with the Iranian government to smooth out any unforeseen difficulties.

In July of 1933, Pope wrote to Holmes to say that the Persian government had approved a dig at the site of Rayy.³⁸ It would be undertaken as a collaboration between the MFA and the Mrs. William Boyce Thompson Foundation of the University of Pennsylvania, with half of the finds going to the Iranian government and the other half to be split between the two U.S. institutions.³⁹ After an initial division into two parts, adjustments were to be made in order to assure that the MFA received adequate “material of artistic interest” and the Penn Museum received sufficient “archaeological material.”⁴⁰ Schmidt would be lead archaeologist (fig. 12.5).

The actual role played by Pope and the American Institute vis-à-vis the Rayy excavation is difficult to ascertain. Neither the man nor the institute provided funds in support of the dig and for that reason the official name of the expedition did not include them, though an effort was consciously made by Holmes and Jayne to appreciatively mention the American Institute often in publications and announcements about the excavation. Reports sent in by Schmidt from the site make no reference to Pope or to anyone working with the American Institute, even when explaining relationships with the government. Pope argued, however, that the Institute was a critical partner in the project. He claimed credit for conceiving of the expedition and making the necessary contacts to bring the collaboration into being. In addition, he asserted that it was he who made the first major effort to end the French monopoly on archaeological digs in Iran and pass the Iranian Antiquities Law of 1930.⁴¹

37 Lipsey 1977, vol. 1, 260–5.

38 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Edward Jackson Holmes, July 16, 1933.

39 For a recent overview of the Rayy expedition, see Treptow 2007, 9–18.

40 Letter from Edward Jackson Holmes to Horace Jayne, May 23, 1933.

41 Vernot 1997, 7.



FIGURE 12.5 *Mary-Helen Warden Schmidt, wife of archaeologist Erich Schmidt, at the site of Rayy, Iran, in 1936*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).

Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948), André Godard (1881–1965) and Frederick Wulsin (1891–1961) receive no mention in his telling of the events leading to this law's passage.

The Rayy dig began in early 1934, and at the end of that year, Holmes was replaced by Edgell as director of the MFA. During his final year, Holmes was able to see the MFA acquire several more objects from Pope. A large silver tray that would come to be known as the 'Alp Arslan salver' was purchased for \$20,000 and accessioned in February of 1934 (fig. 12.6), and a mid-fourteenth-century Mamluk candlestick with exquisite silver and gold inlay purchased from Pope for \$2,500 was accessioned that May.⁴²

Much has been written about the Alp Arslan salver, so only those aspects of the infamous tray that bear on Pope's role at the MFA will be discussed here.⁴³

42 Respectively, 34.68 and 34.168. Minutes from the Collections Committee meeting of February 1, 1934, record that the salver was "offered by Arthur Upham Pope, subject to examination by the Metropolitan Museum silver expert."

43 For a recent discussion of the salver and the manner in which its authenticity was debated, see Watson 2013.



FIGURE 12.6 *Salver with dedication to Alp Arslan. Iran, twentieth century.*
 6.6 × 41 cm (2 5/8 × 16 1/8 in.). Martha Silsbee Fund, 34.68
 (PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).

Doubts about the salver had surfaced within a few months of its accession, and in June of 1934 Pope wrote to Holmes reporting that other dealers of Islamic art had declared it fake and were attempting to have a replica made in Iran by a silversmith who claimed to have made the MFA tray itself.⁴⁴ By July, Denman Waldo Ross, a figure of monumental importance to the MFA in the first half of the twentieth century, had stated that Pope had been “taken in.”⁴⁵

Nevertheless, the August 1934 issue of the MFA bulletin bore a photograph of the salver on its cover and contained an article on the salver by Coomarswamy that addressed and dismissed concerns about its authenticity.⁴⁶ Ardelia Hall (1899–1979), assistant in the department of Asiatic Art, published a substantial article about Persian ceramics in the MFA collection in the same issue, and in February of 1935 she wrote to Pope that “the Boston Museum is in a position

44 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Edward Jackson Holmes, June 18, 1934.

45 Letter from Edward Jackson Holmes to Arthur Upham Pope, July 19, 1934.

46 Volume 32, No. 192.

where it can blaze the trail for the rest of the world in this matter.”⁴⁷ In a certain light, 1934–5 was a moment of triumph for Persian art at the MFA: new acquisitions were being made, scholarship and publications were underway, and they were breaking ground at a new archaeological dig.

Seen in light of the coming decades, however, these years were an ending of sorts, and not a happy one. Despite Holmes’ support, doubts about the salver must have strained goodwill for Pope, especially considering that the stucco debacle was ongoing. Hall wrote to the archaeologist Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970) in 1936 that the matter of the stucco was having “an unfortunate influence on the development of interest in Persian art” at the Museum.⁴⁸ With the promotion of Edgell to Director, Pope’s direct involvement with the MFA came to an end (though Holmes became MFA President and therefore continued to be involved in museum business). Edgell was of a different generation than his predecessor, with a background in history and literature, a PhD from Harvard in Fine Arts, and a specialization in European (particularly Sieneese) painting. The evolution in MFA leadership is described by historian Walter Whitehill thus: “General Loring’s great love was Egypt; his successors, Robinson and Fairbanks, were classical archaeologists. Edward J. Holmes had a particular affinity for the art of the Far and Near East. In all these areas the Museum of Fine Arts was in a stronger position, in terms of international comparison, than in paintings.”⁴⁹ With Edgell as Director, paintings and European art generally would come to the fore in a new way. Indeed, Edgell served simultaneously as Director and as Curator of Paintings, purchasing for the Museum works by Manet and Degas.

Despite his different interests, letters from 1934–8 suggest that Edgell was on cordial terms with Pope. Correspondence between Pope and the MFA between 1934 and the publication of the *Survey* in 1938–9 was, however, mainly dedicated to the gathering of photographs and measurements for the publication. Further acquisitions were not discussed. Loans were made to the Iranian Institute’s 1940 *Exhibition of Persian Art* in New York, but other interactions with Pope and Ackerman dwindled.⁵⁰ The Alp Arslan salver was never deaccessioned, though at some point a question mark was scrawled next to the

47 Letter from Ardelia Hall to Arthur Upham Pope, February 1936. Hall is well known for service, following World War II, as Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Adviser to the US State Department, overseeing the return of art that had been displaced during the War. See Reed 2014, 1–15.

48 Letter from Ardelia Hall to Myron Bement Smith, May 18, 1936.

49 Whitehill 445.

50 Ackerman 1940.

date on its accession card. It has not been included in major studies of Islamic silver published since the 1950s, and a silver box with extremely similar decoration (perhaps made by the same craftsman) sold at Sotheby's in 1985 for only £440.⁵¹

Though it sounds strange, one might say that it was during the 1940s and 50s, when Pope was no longer directly involved at the MFA, that he had the greatest impact on its collections. Holmes, who seems to have been buying from Pope throughout their acquaintance, made a number of gifts of outstanding Islamic objects in the 1940s, and more came after his death in 1950 as gifts of his wife. Among these were a gilded silver Sasanian bottle, a monumental Seljuk ceramic jar with a deep cobalt glaze (fig. 12.7), a Mamluk inlaid basin bearing the titles of Sultan Qalawun (r. 1279–90), and a Mosul candlestick signed by the metalworker Abu Bakr ibn Hajji Jaldak in 1225.⁵² These, and other stellar objects that came to the MFA through Holmes, are among the treasures of the Islamic collection.⁵³ Just why only Holmes and not the MFA itself managed to acquire good objects through Pope is not clear, but it is likely to have been related to the fact that there was no curator at the MFA who specialized in and was dedicated to this area. Coomaraswamy, for all his brilliance, did not strongly advocate for Persian or Islamic art at the museum, and despite being philosophically aligned with Pope, he was not particularly in tune with him regarding curatorial matters.⁵⁴ By himself, Holmes could only do so much.

There is a post script to the story of Pope (and Holmes) at the MFA. In 1949 the United States State Department was in discussions with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (MET) about holding an exhibition of Persian

51 Watson 2013, 67.

52 Respectively: 58.94, 44.829, 50.3627, 57.148.

53 Among the major Islamic gifts from Holmes was one that was later determined to be of modern manufacture. Accession number 48.1283. It is a silver candlestick with extensive inscriptions suggesting that it was a gift of the Seljuk Sultan Sanjar to the shrine of Imam Reza, and was made by Abu'l Fath b. Hasan b. Sa'id Moradi in 523 AH/1129 AD. Acquired in 1948, it was published in the MFA Bulletin in 1949 by Kojiro Tomita. Coomaraswamy had died in 1947. It may have been produced by the same person who created the Alp Arslan salver. It is discussed in relation to the salver in Day 1951, 251, n. 2.

54 Their last significant collaboration was Coomaraswamy's joining the Council of Pope's newly formed India Institute not long before the former's death. Pope wrote to Coomaraswamy in March of 1947 about the new institute, saying: "I want you to think of this India Institute as continuing some of your work. You know in what profound and complete sympathy I have been with everything you have undertaken. Your philosophical and cultural point of view is mine, and I think we can train men to go along the same paths that you have broken through rich jungles..." Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, March 10 and 31, 1947, Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Papers.



FIGURE 12.7

Large jar. Iran, thirteenth century.

69 × 45 cm (27 3/16 × 17 11/16 in.).

Gift of Edward Jackson Holmes,

44.829

(PHOTOGRAPH © 2016 MUSEUM
OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON).

art timed to coincide with a visit to the US of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1941–79). Pope, meanwhile, began angling to have a show of Persian art during the visit of the Shah at his own institute (by that time called the Asia Institute). In the end, two separate exhibitions were held, both opening in November of 1949. The one at the MET (curated by Maurice Dimand [1892–1986], one of Pope’s critics) featured objects from the Tehran Archaeological Museum, the Mashhad Shrine Museum, the Shiraz Museum and the Golestan Library.⁵⁵ The exhibition at the Asia Institute included objects borrowed from many public and private collections, including that of Holmes.⁵⁶ According to the *New York Times*, Muhammad Reza Shah attended and spoke at the opening reception of the Asia Institute’s show, for which sixty objects had been sent from Tehran.⁵⁷

Although Holmes’ name does not appear frequently in the correspondence about it, there is no question that he played a key role in bringing into being an MFA configuration of the two rival exhibitions. For the show, which ran from

55 The exhibition was open from November 22, 1949 to January 22, 1950. Bahrami 1949.

56 The Asia Institute exhibition ran for six weeks. It does not appear that a catalog of this exhibition was published.

57 “Shah Opens Asia Institute Exhibit of Art Treasures from Persia,” *New York Times* (New York), November 24, 1949 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 386–7).

February 9 to April 19, 1950, the MFA arranged to borrow the material shown at the MET as well as a selection of objects from the Asia Institute exhibition, displaying these in two separate galleries.⁵⁸ The Boston exhibition was a great success. Guests at the opening reception were greeted by the Shah's brother and the Iranian Ambassador to the US, and many of their names were subsequently printed in the *Daily Boston Globe's* society column.⁵⁹ In a letter dated May 20, 1950, the Iranian Minister of Education congratulated Holmes and expressed gratitude that "the Iranian show at Boston contributed to the better understanding of the Iranian culture in New England."⁶⁰ This letter arrived just a few days after Holmes died.

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⁵⁸ Bahrami 1950.

⁵⁹ Sherman 1950.

⁶⁰ MFA archives, Iranian Exhibition.

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FIGURE 13.1 *Luster tilework revetment (including the signed and dated mihrab, see fig. 13.2) in the tomb of Imam Reza, Shrine of Imam Reza, Mashhad. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, M3-13*
(COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

Filming, Photographing and Purveying in ‘The New Iran’: The Legacy of Stephen H. Nyman, ca. 1937–42*

Keelan Overton

I think Arthur [Arthur Upham Pope] has been underrated in terms of his ability as a photographer. There I think he needs real re-study, particularly the photographs in the Survey which were the result of several expeditions and done under the most difficult circumstances... Those photographs are really tremendously important. I know how important they are because I’ve been back since and the buildings have been pretty badly damaged. Without the Survey to go by, one would be hard put to know what they really looked like originally.¹

...

We [Harvard] have a proportionally very small number of photos antedating World War II for Iran... Your [Stephen H. Nyman] photographs will greatly enhance this collection and their association with the monumental Pope Survey provided them with a whole extra dimension.²

* This essay is based on research presented between 2012 and 2014: “Doris Duke, Arthur Upham Pope, and Collecting Persian Art in the Early Twentieth Century,” *A Scholars Day Workshop: Collecting Byzantine and Islamic Art*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, June 2012; “Patterns of revivalism: the Safavid/Pahlavi case study through a pan-Islamic lens,” *Historians of Islamic Art Association Biannual Conference*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, October 2012; and “The global legacy of the Masjid-i Shah (blessing or curse?): the recreation of Islamic space and its tile revetment,” *Encounters with Islamic Art: Reception, Revival, and Response*, University of Michigan, February 2014. For generous invitations and travel funding, I am grateful to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, and the University of Michigan Museum of Art. For invaluable archival support, I thank András Riedlmayer and Joanne Bloom (Harvard), Dawn Sueoka and Maja Clark (Shangri La), David Hogge (FGA), and Stephanie Nyman. Finally, I am indebted to Muhammad Mottaghi for sharing his detailed photograph and knowledge of inscriptions.

1 Transfer of cassette tape from Edward M. M. Warburg to Rexford Stead, November 1978 (quoted in *Surveyors*, 272).

2 Letter from Jeff Spurr, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, to Stephen H. Nyman, September 16, 1985.

Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969)—the simultaneously pioneering, domineering, and controversial individual inspiring this volume—typically frames scholarly understanding of American contributions to Persian art history. While Pope’s economic motivations, purveying of Iran’s cultural heritage, and aestheticization of Persian art have been rightly scrutinized, especially in the recent historiography, his photographic skills are incontrovertible (for their day) and the long-term value of his archive is significant (see Warburg above).³ The current understanding of Pope’s photographic oeuvre is largely limited to the approximately two hundred and fifty plates bearing his name in volume 5 (Islamic Architecture) of the original 1938–9 edition of *A Survey of Persian Art*.⁴ Another important resource is a collection of 99 large-scale prints, including some *Survey* images, which Pope exhibited in architectural photography shows during the 1930s and subsequently donated to Harvard University in 1948.⁵ Approximately two decades later, in 1966, the physical assets of the Asia Institute (former American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology)—to include the bulk of the photographs taken by Pope and his colleagues during the nine seasons of the Architectural Survey—were transferred to Shiraz’s Pahlavi University.

According to Rexford Stead, Pope’s “coadventurers” in Iran included “Stephen Nyman and Donald Wilber, Eric Schroeder, Farajollah Bazl, and Robert Byron.”⁶ The latter four individuals are well-known in the historiography of Persian art, and their names appear regularly in the credit lines of

3 Warburg was a patron of the Damghan excavation; for a photograph of him with Pope, see *Surveyors*, 231. A variety of opinions on Pope and his approach to Persian art are presented in Muscarella 1999, Majd 2003, Grigor 2004, and Rizvi 2007, among others. For a recent analysis of Pope’s photography, see Kadoi 2016.

4 See Donald Wilber in *Surveyors*, 264.

5 For a summary of this collection (“A. U. Pope photographs of Iran”), which was part of Pope’s larger effort to persuade the university to acquire his entire archive, visit <http://id.lib.harvard.edu/aleph/012202878/catalog> (accessed May 18, 2015). Individual images can be searched on VIA (Visual Information Access), <http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?collection=via>. Pope’s global photography exhibitions are discussed in *Surveyors*, 273–82; on the far left of the installation shot of the 1932 exhibition at the Musée Guimet (*ibid.*, 273), one can see Harvard, Pope:045. Another important collection of Pope’s photographs is preserved in the University of Michigan’s Islamic Art Archives. The Arthur Upham Pope Collection includes 49 rolls of black and white negatives, hence approximately 1,000 photographs (3/4 more than the published *Survey* corpus). For further information, visit <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/histartvrc/> (accessed February 24, 2014). I am grateful to Christiane Gruber for bringing this archive to my attention and to Cathy Pense and Kim Schroeder for facilitating my research.

6 See Rexford Stead in *Surveyors*, 24.

the volume 5 *Survey* plates. By contrast, little is known of Stephen H. Nyman (1909–88), whose name is not associated with a single *Survey* plate but who in fact provides one of the most comprehensive, accessible, and behind-the-scenes windows into the American Institute's efforts in Iran ca. 1937–42. Nyman stands behind the lens of many of the fieldwork photographs of Pope and his associates in *Surveyors of Persian Art*, and it was Nyman who often provided Pope with detailed technical advice.⁷ This particular “coadventurer” was also responsible for expanding the scope of the Institute's documentation from photography alone to both stills and film.

The fruits of Nyman's filming expertise were three color films each averaging approximately twenty minutes: “The Art of Persia” (focusing on the ‘crafts’ of ceramic tilework, khatamkari, printed cotton textiles, and miniature painting);⁸ “Iran: The New Persia” (a travelogue-like introduction to the country); and “Weaving a Persian Rug” (tracing the step-by-step production of carpets). These films are rare records of the cultural climate—urban landscapes, conditions of monuments, artistic production—during the latter years of the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1925–41), and, to a lesser extent, the opening ones of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1941–79). Nyman shot the majority of his footage between 1937 and 1942, but the finished films were not copyrighted and circulated by the Asia Institute until 1947.⁹ In terms of cities and monuments, the films are rather narrow in scope. Particularly favored are the Shrine of Imam Reza in Mashhad, especially the Mosque of Gawhar Shad; the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah, Masjid-i Shah, Madrasa Chahar Bagh, Ali Qapu, and Chehel Sutun in Isfahan; and the Maidan-i Sepah, Bank-i Melli (Ferdowsi Avenue), and Police Headquarters in Tehran. In addition to producing and editing, Nyman served as the films' narrator. Although his resume notes his involvement in “script writing,” the scripts in question were dictated by Pope's views of Iran and Persian art.¹⁰

Whereas the Asia Institute's archive in Shiraz remains relatively unknown and inaccessible,¹¹ Nyman's photographic record can be readily researched at

7 *Surveyors*, 265–7.

8 Pope and Nyman regularly referred to the art forms in question as ‘crafts’ or ‘handicrafts.’

9 For Nyman's account of filming in Reza Shah's Iran, written after the Ninth Season (1939) of the Architectural Survey, see Nyman 1939. For responses to Nyman's films, see Pope 1946; Annette Ittig in *Surveyors*, 356–8 (on “Weaving a Persian Rug” alone); and Naficy 2011, 173–7.

10 “Resumé of Stephen H. Nyman,” Stephen H. Nyman collection, Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University (hereafter, HU/SHN).

11 See Lerner's chapter in the present volume.

Harvard University, which received it over the course of five years (1985–9). The Stephen H. Nyman collection is notable for its quantity (585 color 35mm. slides, 730 b&w and color film negatives, and 172 b&w photographic prints) and temporal breadth (over four decades of documentation, ca. 1937–79).¹² As mentioned above, none of Nyman's photographs were included in the *Survey*; moreover, just seventeen of his images appear on ArchNet, and it was only in 2013 that material discussed in this essay was uploaded to Harvard's VIA database.¹³ Given these circumstances, Nyman's anonymity in Pope's shadow is not surprising.¹⁴

Nyman's varied activities in relation to Iran and its cultural heritage can be divided into two main categories. The first includes his documentation of buildings and urban landscapes that have since been transformed, including Ilkhanid, Timurid, Safavid, and Pahlavi ones in Mashhad, Isfahan, and Tehran. Some of this fieldwork dovetailed with his second major category of activity, the commercial marketing of Persian art, both of the past and present. While Nyman is most often associated with carpets—"Weaving a Persian Rug" was his most successful film and has been emphasized at the expense of the others—this essay examines his equally significant interest in tilework, to include his participation in a burgeoning export trade of Pahlavi 'mosaic faience.'¹⁵ Nyman's passion for tilework was such that he ultimately registered two U.S. patents ("Method of Glazing a Ceramic Surface," 1970 and 1985), which demonstrate that his involvement with Iran's cultural heritage, like Pope's,

12 For a summary of this collection in Harvard's library catalog (HOLLIS), visit http://hollis.harvard.edu/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?vid=HVD&search_scope=default_scope&docId=HVD_ALEPH012263363&fn=permalink (accessed September 14, 2014).

13 All but one of the ArchNet photographs are of the Masjid-i Jami in Shiraz; see <http://archnet.org> (accessed May 20, 2015).

14 Subscribers to *The National Geographic Magazine* may be familiar with Nyman's work in Iran. Thirteen of his color photographs comprised a photographic insert in a September 1939 article by The Baroness Ravensdale entitled "Old and New in Persia."

15 See Ittig in *Surveyors*, 356–8 and Naficy 2011, 173–7, who tellingly titles his section "Arthur Upham Pope's Carpet-Weaving Films." As revealed by correspondence preserved in the Arthur Upham Pope Papers at the New York Public Library (hereafter, NYPL/AUP), Pope was responsible for securing funding for the carpet film and negotiating its censorship with Iranian authorities (see pages 333–4). The credit for the film's conception and years of related fieldwork in Iran must, however, be given to Nyman. Pope and his circle used the phrase 'mosaic faience' to refer to the technique known today as 'tile mosaic.'

often hinged on commercial acumen and economic incentive.¹⁶ Also like Pope, Nyman perpetuated images of Iranian “fanaticism” and did not hesitate to tout his ostensibly life-threatening efforts in the service of “a dependable scientific record.”¹⁷

Although Nyman's economic and political motivations can and should be questioned—as can those of virtually any foreigner working in Iran in the early twentieth century—his archive can inform the more neutral art histories of the present while also presenting another lens through which to consider Pope, who is too often studied in isolation.¹⁸ After presenting a biography of Nyman, including his interactions with Pope, this essay examines his fieldwork in Mashhad, Tehran, and Isfahan and the potential value of his documentation. It concludes with an exploration of how Nyman and Pope's presentation of Persian art and architecture had a considerable impact on the formation of American art collections in the early twentieth century.

The Biography of a ‘Coadventurer’

Stephen H. Nyman was born in 1909 in Washington, DC and received his BA in Commerce from George Washington University and MS in Business from Columbia University.¹⁹ His earliest exposure to Iran—specifically Persian carpets—occurred during his three-year tenure in the New York City department store B. Altman & Co. For two of his three years at B. Altman & Co., Nyman worked in the Oriental Rugs department, where he “installed a system of stock control, made market surveys, directed the arrangement of stock, [and] bought and sold rugs.”²⁰ In March 1936, he resolved to take his interest in Persian rugs to the next level. His resume explains, “I left B. Altman & Co. to go to Iran and make a motion picture of Persian rug weaving, seeing such a film as good business and wanting to learn more about the subject at first hand.

16 The October 27, 1970 patent (3,536,798) was a continuation of the original one filed January 16, 1967 (609,411). Evidence for the second patent can be found in a letter from Nyman to Jeff Spurr of Harvard: “Incidentally I have two patents regarding my methof [*sic*] of making Persian type mosaic faience, one of which was issued recently, on September 3, 1985.” Letter from Stephen H. Nyman, Potomac, MD, to Jeff Spurr, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, November 5, 1985, HU/SHN.

17 Nyman 1939, 616.

18 As argued in Grigor 2009, 180–1. Also see Grigor's chapter in the present volume.

19 The biography presented in this section is drawn from the three-page “Resumé of Stephen H. Nyman,” HU/SHN.

20 “Resumé of Stephen H. Nyman,” 3, HU/SHN.

An accident in Germany stopped me, and I spent the winter in Italy, returning to the US in March 1937.”²¹ Soon thereafter, he met Pope at a Hajji Baba Club meeting in New York, and “on learning that I still had camera and color film, he invited me to join him on his Institute 1937 expedition to Iran, which I did.”²²

During the Eighth Season (1937) of the Architectural Survey, Nyman filmed and photographed monuments in Isfahan, Tehran, Mashhad, Natanz, and Tabriz, among other places.²³ Additionally, he returned to his original aspiration to produce a carpet film documenting every step in the process from sheathing the wool to drawing the design to cutting the final pile. In a later article, he maintained, “Such a motion picture had never been made before, and we wanted our film to present a complete and authoritative record, in color, of all the processes, step by step, in making a carpet.”²⁴ He further recounted how he shot segments at the National Schools of Design and Dyeing in Tehran, as well as in two private homes (in one, “he got the whole loom by using a 15mm. lens through a window from the outside;” in the other, “he had to hang over a beam at the other end of the room, eight inches from the wall and ceiling, and to film while resting the camera on the beam”).²⁵ Nyman’s film was ultimately developed in Berlin, where it was approved by the Iranian minister, and the finished product (silent) was well-received during a nation-wide lecture tour in the United States (see below).

By the fall of 1938, Nyman had decided to make a second carpet film with music and narration, and Pope began soliciting financial contributions from individuals in the commercial rug business, mainly retailers, wholesalers, and importers. In November 1938, Pope wrote the following to a representative of B. Altman & Co., Nyman’s former employer:

The American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, encouraged by the enthusiastic reception of the colored film of Carpet Weaving which it made last year [1937] and which it has been showing throughout the country, plans to make another much better one. We have been assured

21 “Resumé of Stephen H. Nyman,” 3, HU/SHN.

22 Nyman quoted from *Surveyors*, 355.

23 Nyman’s “Notes Regarding Nyman Color Photos of Iran” is an invaluable list of his photographic archive. Each image has a numeric identification, title and date (for example, “M5-1 [series: Mashhad, Mosque of Gowhar Shad], M.F. panel at base of sanctuary portal ayvan, 1939.”

24 Nyman 1939, 616.

25 Nyman 1939, 640.

of the energetic support of the Iranian government in all elements of the work. We are taking a new and better camera. We shall have more and better lighting facilities, and in as much as we are going in the spring [spring 1939], we will be able to get brilliant and romantic shots of out-of-door scenes. A lecture such as Mr. Nyman has been giving this year will be incorporated in the film as will a background of oriental music—both of which will add to the utility and charm of the film. Shots will be taken in many parts of the country and in Afghanistan. In every particular, it will surpass what we have already done . . . The film presents possibilities as a self-supporting entertainment, as a very effective aid to rug sales and as an admirable way to deepen and secure the normal American interest in the art of the Oriental carpet.²⁶

In the spring of 1939, Nyman participated in the Architectural Survey's Ninth Season alongside Pope, Donald Wilber (1907–97), and Mary Crane (d. ca. 1978), a graduate student in Persian art at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts who also worked for the Institute as an architectural analyst and epigrapher.²⁷ Upon completion of the expedition, Nyman remained in Iran for an additional year (August 1939–August 1940) "to complete the research work and make a series of motion pictures of scenery, architectural monuments, carpet weaving and other art-crafts [in reference to the three films eventually copyrighted by the Asia Institute in 1947]. Twelve months elapsed before I had finished, in which time I had travelled over 10,000 miles and had filmed everything I could think of that would be of interest to western audiences."²⁸

While Nyman stayed on in Iran, Pope began negotiating with Iranian authorities about censorship issues. Approximately a year earlier, on May 19, 1938, Reza Shah's cabinet had passed "Regulations Governing Taking Motion Picture Films and Photographs, Painting and Drawing." Among many details, these regulations stipulated the following: "Filming anything that is inconsistent with the interests, prestige, and dignity of the country is absolutely forbidden."²⁹ In light of these laws, Pope and Iranian authorities agreed that Nyman's 1939 footage would be edited and censored in the presence of a

26 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to James A. Keilor, B. Altman & Co., November 17, 1938, NYPL/AUP.

27 For a photograph of Pope, Crane, Nyman, Wilber and several others in Isfahan's Masjid-i Jami' in May 1939, see *Surveyors*, 269.

28 Nyman quoted from *Surveyors*, 270.

29 Naficy 2011, 171.

member of the Imperial Legation of Iran in Washington, DC.³⁰ By the end of the year, however, Tehran demanded the return of Nyman's first rolls of film to Iran, stimulating an increasingly frustrated Pope to counter:

These films have cost us \$10,000. It is an extremely risky thing to send them over there and back. We have no assurance that anyone in the Police Department is capable of cutting such a film successfully. We do know that they have completely ruined certain films that were put in their charge. Moreover, we were definitely assured that it would not be necessary to return the films to Iran. There was a representative of the Police with us all the time while these pictures were being taken, and censorship has already been exercised, as no views have been taken that they have not approved. It is, of course, very disappointing to us to be treated as if we were not friends of the country. We have proven our loyalty over and over again, and demonstrated that we are as much concerned for the prestige of the country as anyone.³¹

Pope's anxiety was such that he also drafted a telegram directly to Reza Shah: "Earnestly request your [crossed out] Majesty's Permission to have colored film Iranian carpet weaving censored Washington Legation as promised . . . Ruinous our Institute crippling its work for Iran."³²

While Pope negotiated with Washington and Tehran, Nyman continued to work in Iran and soon faced his own set of difficult circumstances. In late 1940, Iran was becoming increasingly entangled in World War II, and Nyman and several other Americans decided to leave the country for India.³³ While in Delhi, Nyman learned about the uncertain fate of his first batch of work (1939) and resolved to return to Iran for what he termed a "second start" on the carpet

30 Letter from 'Ali Akbar Daftary, Imperial Legation of Iran, Washington, DC, to Arthur Upham Pope, New York, August 12, 1939, NYPL/AUP.

31 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope to 'Ali Akbar Daftary, December 6, 1939, NYPL/AUP. Also see letter from Arthur Upham Pope to 'Ali Akbar Daftary, January 5, 1940, NYPL/AUP (for the assurance that General Mokhtadeh and Colonel 'Ata provided to Nyman) and Naficy 2011, 171 (for various filming rules).

32 Draft telegram from Arthur Upham Pope to Reza Shah, December 18, 1939, NYPL/AUP. By 1939, Pope and Reza Shah had spent over a decade collaborating in the marketing and purveying of Iran's cultural heritage.

33 For a photograph of the group taking a lunch break near Mashhad in late 1940, see *Surveyors*, 271.

weaving film.³⁴ On June 6, 1942, he left Quetta in a Buick purchased in Delhi and arrived in Kirman ten days later. He next went to Tehran, where he spent "six weeks bucking formalities as usual" and dealing with "red-tape."³⁵

Once settled in Kirman, Nyman took a new approach to his documentation of carpet weaving. This time, he would order a carpet inspired by a sixteenth-century model and film its production from start to finish. For the prototype, he chose a small Kashan silk carpet (66 × 97 in.) affiliated with his first employer, the department store magnate Benjamin Altman, who had bequeathed a significant collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1913.³⁶ Speaking like a business graduate and former employee of B. Altman & Co., Nyman wrote to Pope, "All in all I believe that the film plus the other ideas will do worlds of good for the carpet business. And so you can tell those so-and-sos in New York that I'm really on the job, and that I am going to bring back a film that will knock their eyes out—or bust."³⁷

Nyman's decision in 1942 to order a replica of a historical model was far from novel but rather reflective of global trends rooted in the imitation of Safavid art, in all media, to varying degrees of faithfulness.³⁸ Pope was an avid participant in this paradigm, as exemplified by his exhibition (with Myron Bement Smith; 1897–1970) of Sarkis Katchadourian's copies of Safavid wall paintings at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932, his commissioning of architectural recreations of the Masjid-i Shah at Philadelphia's Sesquicentennial International

34 Cablegram from "Nyman [Stephen H. Nyman]," New Delhi, to "Pope Ackerpope" [Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman], New York, November 6, 1941, NYPL/AUP. "Second start" is quoted from letter from "Steve" [Stephen H. Nyman] to "Mr. Pope" [Arthur Upham Pope], September 15, 1942, NYPL/AUP.

35 Letter from "Steve" [Stephen H. Nyman] to "Mr. Pope" [Arthur Upham Pope], September 15, 1942, NYPL/AUP.

36 For an image of the prototype, Nyman relied on a black and white reproduction in F. R. Martin's *A History of Oriental Carpets before 1800* (Vienna, 1908). On Altman's bequest to the Metropolitan, and images of his collection on view at the museum in 1914 and 1926, see Lindsey 2012.

37 Letter from "Steve" [Stephen H. Nyman] to "Mr. Pope" [Arthur Upham Pope], September 15, 1942, NYPL/AUP, 2.

38 Pahlavi-period processes of Safavid revivalism built upon Qajar paradigms that in turn hinged on centuries-old traditions of Persian artistic practice rooted in design transfer and reproduction (depending on time and place, the chief conduits of transmission being textiles, drawings, prints, and photographs). For a recent analysis, see Roxburgh 2014, esp. 110 ("artistic processes of the nineteenth century can equally be characterized as a continuation and not a definitive break from past working methods") and 120 ("Qajar lacquer artists reconfigured prototypes into new arrangements and combinations . . . While this form of production was not new . . . Qajar artists applied it to their great advantage").

Exposition (1926) and London's International Exhibition of Persian Art (1931), and his involvement in an Isfahani workshop's creation of Safavid-inspired tilework for American patrons in 1938–9 (discussed further in *Honolulu: The Collection of Doris Duke Cromwell*).³⁹ Like Pope, Nyman capitalized on processes of revivalism and recreation in all media. Concurrent to his 1942 carpet project, he ordered samples of new mosaic based on his Kodachrome photographs taken five years earlier (ca. 1937) of historic tilework (likely Safavid).⁴⁰ These samples were being sent to a contact in Lahore, for Nyman believed that “Indian Maharajas” presented a viable export market.

In 1943, Nyman began a three-year position at the American Financial Mission to Iran, a day job that he combined with further work for Pope's Institute. In January 1946, he returned to New York to focus on his three films (“The Art of Persia,” “Iran: The New Persia,” and “Weaving a Persian Rug”), all of which were finally released by the Asia Institute in 1947. Nyman soon returned to Iran, this time under the employ of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, to gather film footage “to be used as backgrounds for photoplays, as newsreels and for travelogues such as ‘Movietone Adventures’ and ‘Magic Carpet of Movietone.’”⁴¹ In 1952, he opened his own film studio in Tehran, which, according to him, was responsible for the country's first newsreels and regular program of dublage (dubbing of photoplays into Persian). He appears to have lived in Iran until 1965, during which time he also worked for the American Embassy and the Iran-America Society. In 1966, he returned to the United States, and in 1985, he showed his “Persia and Her Magic Carpet” (a combination of his three 1947 films) to an audience at Harvard. That same year, he began gifting components of his archive to the university, a five-year process (1985–9) completed by his widow after his death in 1988.

39 On these events and revivalist discourses ca. 1926–38, see Overton 2012A, 66–68 and 75–79. For Katchadourian's exhibitions after MOMA 1932, see Bombardier 2013, 202.

40 “I am copying some of the Kodachromes that I took here five years ago. I project the picture on the wall, and a designer traces one half of it off in pencil. He then doubles the design and presses it onto another sheet of paper, after which he puts the colours in, copying them with a magnifying glass from the original Kodachrome. Some of them have come out remarkably well.” Letter from “Steve” [Stephen H. Nyman] to “Mr. Pope” [Arthur Upham Pope], September 15, 1942, NYPL/AUP, 2.

41 “Resumé of Stephen H. Nyman,” 2, HU/SHN.

Filming and Photographing in 'The New Iran'

Nyman's film and photography from the Eighth (1937) and Ninth (1939) seasons of the Architectural Survey, combined with his independent work in 1942, constitute a valuable archival resource for scholarship of the present. Some of his original footage can be seen in the Asia Institute's three 1947 films; however, these films were heavily censored, as will be shown.⁴² His photographs from this period were ostensibly shot too late to be included in the 1938–9 *Survey* and are therefore only known through the Harvard archive.⁴³ They are often more neutral and interesting than those reproduced in the *Survey*, for they are characterized by a behind-the-scenes, contextual, and at times raw quality. We sense that Nyman shot rapidly, capturing anything and everything he could, and photographed and filmed simultaneously.⁴⁴ By contrast, Pope often approached photography as fine art (rather than strictly documentation), staged lengthy exposures (to what end?), circulated his polished images in an international exhibition tour, and donated many of these iconic enlargements to Harvard in 1948. His choices and biases during the photographic process warrant sustained consideration.⁴⁵

Mashhad: 'Firsts' at the Shrine of Imam Reza

Nyman's invitation to participate in the Eighth Season (1937) was fortuitous, for it coincided with the expedition being granted "constant access to the shrine area of Imam Reza."⁴⁶ Since this documentation was gathered at the end of the season (November 1937), it was not included in the *Survey*, which only features

42 In some cases, we can match Nyman's dated color slides, such as a 1937 example of a young woman spinning wool, with segments in the 1947 films (for this woman in "Weaving a Persian Rug," see 6:22–7:00).

43 We might wonder if some (not all) of Nyman's 1937 work would have been available for the *Survey*, but Pope simply preferred to use his own photographs. In his 1939 article, Nyman wrote the following about the 1937 season: "The expedition, led by Professor Arthur Upham Pope, traveled over 10,000 miles in the Near East, Persia and Afghanistan, photographing many ancient monuments for the Institute's Survey of Persian Architecture." The proprietary arrangements between Pope and Nyman remain to be clarified. Did Pope buy the rights to Nyman's images? Did they ever share rights? Although Nyman labeled most of his color slides with his name alone and the date (1937, 1939, 1940, 1942), some read "Stephen H. Nyman Pope," implying a degree of collaboration or shared rights between the two.

44 On simultaneous filming and photography, see footnote 42 above.

45 As in Kadoi 2016.

46 Donald Wilber quoted from *Surveyors*, 264.

images of the Mosque of Gawhar Shad (pls. 428–37). Never one to miss a marketing opportunity, Pope recounted the following about the Institute's efforts at Mashhad in the BBC weekly *The Listener*:

We start to work [in the tomb chamber] in a distracting mêlée of sounds, the resonant chants of the Koran readers mingle with exultant cries of hysterical jubilation. Anguished sobs tell of terror or grief seeking comfort. From every side crowd excited worshippers held back for the time by the great golden and silver doors. We abashed intruders from the prosaic West, just a bit flustered, try to keep cool, get our cameras and surveying instruments into action, seeking in the midst of the beauty and passion of the Orient to get on with our unemotional scientific task of making a record that would enable all to share in these moving experiences.⁴⁷

Nyman soon paralleled Pope's dramatic account of the Mashhad "firsts" in two public forums: his *Movie Makers* article "Filming in the New Iran" and his film "Iran: The New Persia."⁴⁸ The twenty-two-minute-long film concludes with an eight-minute segment devoted to the shrine, whose size Nyman compares to the Pentagon. He describes the Mosque of Gawhar Shad as "unrivaled by any other structure extant," focuses on its "quadrangle" (courtyard) layout with four "portals" (*ivans*), compares the Timurid mosque to the medieval cathedral, relates a few anecdotes about its female patron, and zooms in on the "mosaic faience" panels decorating its northeast *ivan* (the one connecting the mosque to the tomb of Imam Reza).⁴⁹ His camera then moves into the Old Court, but instead of capturing the most important *ivan*—that of Mir 'Ali Shir Nava'i (d. 1501) leading into the tomb area—it focuses on two others. Despite Nyman's insistence in his 1939 article that he was the first westerner to film in color inside the tomb of Imam Reza, his film includes just a brief zoomed in shot of the *zarih*.⁵⁰ We can therefore assume that his raw footage from 1937 was heavily censored for the final 1947 film.

47 Pope 1938.

48 "But the tomb of Imam Reza at Mashhad was just one of the photographic 'firsts' that we piled up on the 1937 expedition." Nyman 1939, 616.

49 For the northeast *ivan* in the Mosque of Gawhar Shad, see "Iran: The New Persia," 17:45.

50 "I filmed the tomb of the greatest saint of Shia Muhammad. I filmed it in color, shooting between the protecting bars and using a wide angle lens to get the whole of the tomb in the picture . . . although circumstances were far from ideal, I got a satisfactory color picture of the tomb . . . And nobody had done that before." Nyman 1939, 616. For the *zarih* segment in "Iran: The New Persia," see 20:32.

In contrast to his censored film footage, Nyman's photographs are relatively transparent records of the 1937 Mashhad expedition. Approximately thirty color slides (M5 series) are preserved in the Harvard repository; their quality is mixed, but most are dated and identified by Nyman himself. Some capture furnishings and works of art—doors, tiles, *zarih*—that have since been removed to the Shrine Museum or replaced. As such, they are valuable visual evidence of the biography of an ever evolving and 'living' shrine complex.

Nine photographs were taken inside the tomb of Imam Reza.⁵¹ One focuses on the *zarih*, which is notable for its lack of an arcade and simplicity in relation to a later replacement.⁵² The remaining eight photographs document the luster tilework decorating the tomb's walls, the majority of which dates to an early-thirteenth-century Khwarazmshahi renovation by the well-known potters Abu Zayd and Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir.⁵³ The tomb chamber originally included two luster mihrabs on the south wall. The example once on the right—*mihrab-i pish ru* (mihrab before the face [of the Blessed One])—is dated AH Rabi' II 612/AD August 1215 and signed in several places, while that on the left—*mihrab-i pa'in pa* (mihrab at the foot [of the Blessed One])—presumably dates to the same Khwarazmshahi renovation (ca. AH 612/AD 1215).⁵⁴ Running around the room was, and largely still is, a large horizontal frieze with cobalt-glazed inscriptions, a small horizontal frieze with luster-painted inscriptions, and a dado composed of variously-shaped tiles (octagons, stars, double bow-ties). In AH 640/AD 1242, a third luster mihrab signed 'Ali ibn

51 HU/SHN, M3-9–17. Slides M3-10, M3-11, and M3-14 are missing from the slide sheet. According to Nyman's "Notes Regarding Nyman Color Photos of Iran" (HU/SHN), they depict "Dado, wall of tomb of Imam Reza" (M3-10), "Same" (M3-11), and "Same" ("Mihrab in tomb chamber," M3-14).

52 HU/SHN, M3-9. For a photograph of the *zarih* created by Isfahani craftsmen in 1962–4 and evidently requiring seven tons of metal (288 kg. of gold), see Saadat 1976, pl. 32. Also see Canby 2009, fig. 62.

53 This tilework has been reproduced and discussed in a number of publications, including Donaldson 1935, Bahrami 1944–5, Watson 1985, Farhat 2002, Blair 2008, Kafili 2013, and Blair 2014, the latter building off of her earlier conference presentations entitled "Ali b. Muhammad's mihrab and its mates" ("Color Cladding: Islamic Tiles from the Doris Duke Collection," Honolulu, March 2011) and "Shining Bright: Luster Mihrabs from Medieval Iran" (College Art Association, New York, February 2013). I am grateful to Sheila Blair for conversations about these mihrabs and to curators Heshmat Kafili and Maryam Habibi for the warm welcome and inspirational visit in May 2014.

54 Both of these mihrabs are now on view in the same gallery in the Shrine Museum; see Blair 2014, figs. 6 and 7. On the signatures in the Abu Zayd example, see Blair 2014, 410.

Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir was created for the mosque to the immediate west of the tomb chamber (Masjid-i Bala-i Sar).⁵⁵

When the Institute's team arrived in Mashhad in 1937, relatively little was known in western art historical circles about the tomb of Imam Reza, and only two photographs had been published in a 1935 *Ars Islamica* article. The first is a general shot of the sanctuary with the dated Abu Zayd mihrab barely visible behind the *zarih*, while the second is an overall of the anonymous ca. 1215 mihrab on the left side of the same wall.⁵⁶ Regarding the former, the author maintained that it was "so close to the tomb that it was impossible to photograph it without standing with one's back toward the Imam, which would of course be out of the question."⁵⁷

The circumstances outlined above underscore the importance of Nyman's photographs, which constitute rare in situ documentation of the tomb chamber's thirteenth-century tile revetment. Besides a photograph reproduced in 1976, Nyman's 1937 images are currently the only 'known' color photographs of the sanctuary with the mihrabs in situ.⁵⁸ In contrast to the 1976 photograph, which is directed toward the entrance to the left of the Abu Zayd mihrab, Nyman's image captures the other side of the wall—the corner zone obscured behind the *zarih* in the 1935 photograph—and presents a dynamic play of light and shadow across the luster surfaces (fig. 13.1). A second Nyman photograph focuses exclusively on the Abu Zayd mihrab and documents its fine condition in the 1930s, save for the replacement of its original luster columns by marble ones (fig. 13.2).⁵⁹ A third is a partial view (upper right) of the anonymous

55 This mihrab is currently on view in a stairwell area of the Shrine Museum and is in very poor condition; see Blair 2014, fig. 10 and 411.

56 Donaldson 1935, figs. 1 and 2. According to Donaldson, these photographs had been "taken recently by the official Shrine photographer." Donaldson 1935, 118.

57 Donaldson 1935, 121.

58 See Saadat 1976, pl. 33, also reproduced in Farhat 2002, fig. 3, Kafili 2013, fig. 7, and Blair 2014, fig. 5. I qualify my use of "known" because the shrine's archive likely preserves a wealth of color imagery, as suggested by Kafili 2013, fig. 12. Since Nyman's original color slides have deteriorated and turned pink, I have here reproduced the black and white digital versions (see figs. 13.1–2).

59 The floor of the tomb chamber was subsequently raised, and the lower portion of the mihrab—including the horizontal panel dated Rabi' 11 612—was obscured. For this shortened iteration, see Saadat 1976, pl. 33, where the mihrab's lower edge occurs just beneath the diamond-shaped signature cartouche naming Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir. In the current museum display, the dated panel and flanking lower elements have been returned, thereby recapturing the original proportions. In the same gallery, parts of the original luster columns are also on view; see Kafili 2013, fig. 8.



FIGURE 13.2 *Luster mihrab dated AH Rabi' II 612/AD August 1215 and signed by Abu Zayd and Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir, tomb of Imam Reza, Shrine of Imam Reza, Mashhad (see fig. 13.1 for greater context). Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, M3-15 (COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).*

ca. 1215 mihrab and reveals that a frieze of molded turquoise tiles once framed its upper edge.⁶⁰ Finally, a fourth photograph zooms in on the dado and inscription friezes to the right of the Abu Zayd mihrab.⁶¹ Among other things, it contextualizes the individual tiles now on view in the Shrine Museum, including octagons, 8-pointed stars, and rectangles once part of the diminutive, luster-painted inscription frieze beneath the large, molded example (see fig. 13.1).⁶²

Tehran: 'Neo' Modernisms

This essay has already considered how Nyman shot portions of his original 1937 silent carpet film in Tehran's National Schools of Design and Dyeing.⁶³ While documenting the making of his first love (carpets), Nyman also recorded the production of other 'crafts.' This footage was ultimately enough to constitute a separate film, "The Art of Persia," which served three purposes: to record the manufacture of 'mosaic faience,' khatamkari, printed cotton textiles, and miniature painting; to extol Iranian artists who excelled in such production; and to bolster Iran's burgeoning export trade of contemporary 'craft.' This tripartite agenda was perfectly in keeping with the broader commercial and propagandist aims of the Society for National Heritage and Pope.⁶⁴

For those concerned with Iran's international "prestige" and "dignity,"⁶⁵ the educator and artist Hussein Tahirzadeh Behzad (d. 1962), who prepares a carpet design in Nyman's "Weaving a Persian Rug," represented the contemporary ideal of synergism between Iran's historical past and modernist present.⁶⁶ Behzad worked in both Turkey and Iran, and among his most significant commissions in the latter were wall paintings for Reza Shah's palaces (Shadabad/Green Palace, 1928; White Palace, 1932; Marble Palace, 1934).⁶⁷ These hybrid paintings blended pre-Islamic Persian icons (Bahram Gur, Persepolis) with

60 HU/SHN, M3-16. These turquoise tiles are not included in the current museum display. See Kafili 2013, figs. 10-13, for various iterations of this mihrab over time, including an inscription once in place of the turquoise tiles (Kafili 2013, fig. 11).

61 HU/SHN, M3-17.

62 A comparable view of the dado is reproduced in Watson 1985, fig. 105. For several dated octagonal tiles, see Bahrami 1944-5, pl. 19 (also Farhat 2002, fig. 4).

63 See page 332.

64 Nyman's film closely parallels Pope's stance and language in his well-known 1925 speech; for a reprint, see *Surveyors*, 93-110.

65 See page 333.

66 "Weaving a Persian Rug," 9:05. The history presented in this paragraph is drawn from Daftari and Diba 2013, 47-53. For a slightly different narrative, see Keshmirshakan 2013, 43-48.

67 Some of these wall paintings are reproduced in Daftari and Diba 2013, figs. 22 and 24.



FIGURE 13.3

Hussein Behzad Miniatur (as identified on the verso), Tehran. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, 24.7

(COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

contemporary Pahlavi advancements (the railroad) and techniques generally associated with the west (perspective, modeling).

In the early 1930s, Behzad was responsible for reorganizing Tehran's Madrasa-i Sanayi'-i Mustazrafa (founded by Kamal al-Mulk in 1911). A center for traditional crafts was incorporated into the Madrasa, and the school itself was divided into sections devoted to 'New Arts' (sculpture, painting) and 'Old Arts' (miniature painting, carpet production). A specialist in the latter section was the painter Hussein Behzad (1894–1968; also known as Hussein Behzad Miniatur), who initially practiced a conservative form of Neo-Safavidism but gradually developed a new idiom merging revivalism and modernism (fig. 13.3).⁶⁸ In "The Art of Persia," Hussein Behzad is shown drawing an elderly

68 On Hussein Behzad, see Diba 1989. Diba has recently argued an important point: "Artists such as Hossein Behzad (1894–1968) did not see themselves as retardataire, or as copyists, but rather as participants of the modern era, much as *arrière-garde* artists in Europe were returning to figuration in the post cubist era." Daftari and Diba 2013, 52. Bombardier similarly emphasizes Hussein Behzad's blending of neo-Safavidism and modernism: "Therefore, partly in response to the vogue of Persian art that occurred in Europe in the 1930s and that he had witnessed, Husayn Bihzad probably gave birth to a new artistic movement called today 'new miniature' (*nigargari-ye jadid*)." Bombardier 2013, 203.

man while Nyman underscores the artist's dual proficiency: "He is also remarkable at doing portraits in the seventeenth-century style. His stroke is swift and sure. He works with the speed of a modern charcoal caricaturist."⁶⁹

The revivalist-modernist paradigm championed in Tehran's schools by individuals like Hussein Tahirzadeh Behzad and Hussein Behzad Miniatur was paralleled by a concurrent refashioning of the city's built environment. Under state-sponsorship, a number of government buildings (ministries, museums, schools) combined the somber volumes of the International Style with revivalist street facades (Neo-Achaemenid, Neo-Sassanian, among others).⁷⁰ Nyman documented this Pahlavi architectural discourse in his "Iran: The New Persia," a title that betrays the shifting packaging of the country.⁷¹ At the onset of the film, Nyman describes Tehran as a "modern city compared to what it was two decades ago," a reality he credits to the modernization efforts of the late Reza Shah (recall that the film was copyrighted in 1947, during the reign of Muhammad Reza Shah).

While conceding that Reza Shah's methods have been "severely criticized"—indeed, his "tabula rasa" policy resulted in widespread demolition of residential and historical architecture⁷²—Nyman nonetheless praises Tehran's "wide, tree-lined avenues of asphalt and modern buildings." Dismissive of buildings like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which "do not make use of Iran's own rich architectural tradition," he commends those that incorporate historic quotations. The Imperial Bank of Persia on the Maidan-i Sepah—the main square previously known as Maidan-i Tupkhaneh—is a "handsome building, a good combination of Persian and Byzantine architecture." Additional new structures that "effectively use characteristics of old Persian style" are the National Bank (Bank-i Melli), the Police Headquarters, and the National Museum.⁷³ In sum, this segment of "Iran: The New Persia" constitutes a valuable 'moving' counterpart to the photographic archive.

69 "The Art of Persia," 15:11.

70 This "Neo" tradition has received considerable scholarly attention. Among others, see Marefat 1988, Grigor 2009, and the summary of Pahlavi historicism in Grigor 2014, 101-5 (including fig. 5.3). Such revivalist trends were neither an early-twentieth-century invention (see footnote 38) nor restricted to Iran alone. On continuities and differences between Qajar and Pahlavi revivalism, see Grigor 2015. On Neo-Mamluk, see Rabat 1997 and Volait 2006.

71 For the segment discussed in this paragraph and the next, see "Iran: The New Persia," 8:06–9:48.

72 On Reza Shah's "tabula rasa" approach to Tehran, see Grigor 2014, 96–100.

73 "Iran: The New Persia," 9:24 (National Bank), 9:36 (Police Headquarters), and 9:42 (National Museum).

Isfahan: Epigraphic Politics

While documenting Tehran's modernisms, Nyman also filmed and photographed the Safavid Isfahani monuments identified as the most worthy of global purveying: the Masjid-i Shah, Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah, Madrasa Chahar Bagh, Ali Qapu, and Chehel Sutun. Nyman's visual record of the former three buildings captures their tile revetment before, during, and after repairs, and his archive can therefore be added to the growing list of sources available for the study of historic preservation in early-twentieth-century Iran.⁷⁴ Building on previous discussions of Isfahan's reinvigoration during the 1930s, this analysis focuses on the epigraphic record of restoration munificence between ca. 1920 and 1940.⁷⁵ Since some of the inscriptions in question are no longer extant, the photographic archive is mined as a critical resource.

Nyman's 1937 documentation confirms a well-known fact—Iranian tilework requires continual restoration—while underscoring the decrepit condition of many of Isfahan's Safavid monuments at the onset of the Pahlavi period.⁷⁶ By the time of Nyman's visit, the restoration of the city's tile revetment had been underway for years, and likely decades. Photographs of the Madrasa Chahar

74 Two additional key sources for the mid-1930s are the archive of Myron Bement Smith (Myron Bement Smith Collection, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Katherine Dennis Smith, 1973–85; hereafter, FSG/MBS) and the Isfahani annual entitled *Salnamah-i Ma'arif-i Isfahan Sal-i Tahsili, 1313–1314*, both of which are discussed in Overton 2012A, 62–66.

75 Tile restoration efforts in 1930s Isfahan are summarized in Overton 2012A. Reza Shah, the SNH and Pope were far from the first to respond to the architectural heritage and tilework of Safavid Isfahan. During the reign of Nasir al-Din (r. 1848–96), new tilework was installed on many of the Safavid monuments discussed here (see pages 346–8), and in 1877, Robert Murdoch Smith commissioned full-scale, traced and painted replicas of Safavid tile designs (mostly from the Madrasa Chahar Bagh) for the Victoria & Albert Museum. On the latter, see Carey 2014, which illuminates critical precedents for the early-twentieth-century processes discussed here (I thank the author for many compelling conversations). It was also during the late nineteenth century that Tehran-based artists like 'Ali Muhammad Isfahani attempted to revive the technique of luster, largely in response to collectors like the V&A agent, Smith. See Watson 1985, 169–77 (esp. fig. 142, VAM 567–1888, an 1887 tile by 'Ali Muhammad replicating a portion of an Ilkhanid epigraphic frieze) and Blair 2014, 412. While Pope and his colleagues often credited Pahlavi potters alone for reviving supposedly lost techniques, Qajar ceramists had clearly made considerable strides decades earlier, as further attested by 'Ali Muhammad's own treatise entitled *On the Manufacture of Modern Kashi Earthenware Tiles and Vases* (Edinburgh, 1888).

76 For Qajar photographs of the maidan capturing the stripped facades of both the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah and Masjid-i Shah, see Semsar and Saraian 2003, 215–9.

Bagh taken by Myron Bement Smith in July 1935 capture a large, diamond-shaped repair inscription on the courtyard-facing side of its dome (fig. 13.4).⁷⁷ Dated AH 1342/AD 1923–4, this conspicuous memorialization reveals that the madrasa was restored at the close of the Qajar dynasty during the reign of Ahmad Shah (r. 1909–25).⁷⁸ At some point between July 1935 and April 1938, the Qajar inscription was removed and replaced by floral patterning.⁷⁹ This form of erasure, likely deliberate by the Pahlavi regime during its continued restoration of the building, typifies epigraphic politics centering on Isfahan's iconic Safavid monuments.

Between ca. 1928 and 1936, the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah was also the focus of concerted, incremental restoration. The repair of the mosque's entrance *ivan* was documented in a lunette-shaped inscription glorifying Reza Shah and dated SH Aban 1307/AD October–November 1928 (fig. 13.5).⁸⁰ This panel was undoubtedly conceived in conversation with the epigraphic 'signatures' of two previous regimes located on the same vertical axis. Directly below was a similarly-sized panel with a central oval inscribed "the source of power lies in 'Ali's descendants"—likely Qajar due to its distinct palette and similar tilework dating to Nasir al-Din's reign elsewhere on the maidan—and in turn,

77 The same inscription is also visible in FSG/MBS, L82.25, L82.26, and L83.3, among others; also see Harvard, Pope:043, available online at http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via (accessed June 3, 2015). Of the archives discussed here, Smith's is arguably the most comprehensive, useful and sophisticated (in terms of the technical photography and record-keeping).

78 The inscription reads *bi-tavajjuh-i vali-'asr khadim-i din bi-ta'mir-i gunbad-i madras muvaf-faq shud 'Abd al-Husayn Lamdar 1342* (under the supervision of the heir apparent, servant of religion, 'Abd al-Husayn Lamdar succeeded in the repair of the madrasa's dome, [in the year] 1342) (I thank Wheeler Thackston for his analysis). For an earlier Qajar response to the madrasa's tilework—the painted panels commissioned by Robert Murdoch Smith in 1877—see Carey 2014, which also reproduces nineteenth-century images of the building (Carey 2014, figs. 11–13).

79 See the April 1938 photograph taken by James Cromwell and preserved in the Doris Duke Papers on the Shangri La Residence, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Historical Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University (hereafter DDCFHA).

80 Although the white on blue inscription in fig. 13.5 here is difficult to decipher, a Pope photograph allows it to be read as *dar 'ahd-i saltanat-i 'ala-i hazrat-i aqdas-i humayun-i shahanshah Riza Shah Pahlavi khallad allah mulkah va sultanah ta'mir shud*; see Harvard, Pope:049, visible online at http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via (accessed June 3, 2015). Since the date remains unclear, I rely on Hunarfar 1971, 406–7, but convert his Aban 1307 to October–November 1928. Also see Overton 2014 and Blair 2013, 26.



FIGURE 13.4 *Courtyard-facing side of the dome of the Madrasa Chahar Bagh, Isfahan, with a now lost repair inscription dated AH 1342/AD 1923–4. Photograph by Myron Bement Smith, July 7, 1935, L83.3. Myron Bement Smith Collection, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC., Gift of Katherine Dennis Smith, 1973–85.*

beneath a Qajar grill, the lengthy Safavid foundation inscription signed by 'Ali Reza al-'Abbasi and dated AH 1012/AD 1603–4.⁸¹

The significance of the Pahlavi panel within an enduring tradition of epigraphic 'turf war,' one literally topping the next, is confirmed by its eventual erasure, a phenomenon recalling the fate of the previously discussed Qajar inscription on the Madrasa Chahar Bagh.⁸² In today's Islamic Republic, the space once housing the Reza Shah panel remains noticeably unadorned, as if to emphasize the Pahlavi whitewashing in perpetuity.⁸³ Of further interest is the fact that the epigraphic commemorations of Shah 'Abbas (1603–4), likely Nasir al-Din and/or Zill al-Sultan (governor of Isfahan, 1874–1907), and Reza Shah (1928) have been most recently translated into boldly figural equivalents, as demonstrated by the portraits of Imam Khomeini (1902–89) and other leaders of the Islamic Republic on the facing Ali Qapu. For over four centuries, and by no means diminishing in the present, the facades of the maidan have functioned as potent canvases for the broadcasting of sovereignty.⁸⁴

Pahlavi repairs to the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah appear to have subsequently focused on the two-tiered band of Qur'anic text encircling the drum of the dome, well over half of which had "completely disappeared."⁸⁵ This extensive restoration was memorialized in a mosaic inscription dated SH 1311/AD 1932–3 that remains extant at the end of the Qur'anic text (closing with

81 The lengthy Qajar inscription on the façade of the adjacent bazaar is dated AH 1298/AD 1880–1 and names Nasir al-Din and Zill al-Sultan, among others. For 'Ali Reza al-'Abbasi's dated signature on the façade of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah, see Blair 2013, fig. 1.4.

82 The panel was visible when the Baroness Marie-Thérèse Ullens de Schooten photographed the mosque in ca. 1950–60 (Harvard, Ullens Collection, HSM UL95.01514). While we can logically presume its erasure under the Islamic Republic (1979 onward), especially given its bold commemoration of Reza Shah, this remains to be verified.

83 For this area today, see Khaghani 2013, fig. 16.10.

84 This phenomenon is far from surprising, given the maidan's longstanding significance as a political, sacred, economic, and social space. What I underscore here is the utility of the archival record for reconstructing the layered epigraphic dialogues (responses, ruptures, continuities) between regimes in recent centuries, as well as the figural imperative as of 1979 onward.

85 I quote a page/drawing from one of André Godard's field notebooks (La Masjid-i Shaikh Lutf Allah, no. 105, January 6, 1932, Harvard, Fine Arts Library) in which he divides the band into 54 parts and observes that 12 were extant and the remaining 42 had completely disappeared and been repaired. For a photograph documenting this significant loss, see Harvard, Pope:048, visible online at http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via (accessed June 3, 2015). On the original Qur'anic band, in mosaic and probably also by 'Ali Reza, see Blair 2013, 15–16.

72:18) in a perpendicular format recalling Safavid models (see the dated signature of 'Ali Reza on the façade).⁸⁶ In 1935–6, the dome above was repaired by Ustads Ghaffar and Nasrallah, and attention next shifted to the u-shaped entrance portal surrounding the main *ivan*.⁸⁷ A 1937 photograph by Nyman captures the portal covered in a white material (fig. 13.5), while a 1942 example reveals entirely new *cuerda seca* surfaces.⁸⁸

Nyman's 1937 documentation also focused on repairs to the Masjid-i Shah, and as was typical, he emphasized the materials and techniques of production (recall his subsequent patents). While photographing the restoration of the dome, he captured each step in the process: the drawing of the design, the cutting of the individual bricks, and the arrangement of the fragments face down on a template erected in the winter prayer hall (figs. 13.6–13.7). Nyman's index caption for T6-3 is telling: "Drawing part of design of glazed brick for repair of dome of M-i-S, Isf. NB Brick is used as tile for a dome because pigeons' claws can and does [*sic*] displace the thinner tile."⁸⁹ A related photograph (see fig. 13.6) shows the bricks in question, which are long, thick, and glazed in cobalt on one side.⁹⁰

86 The inscription reads *dar sal-i hizar-i si sad va yazda khurshidi ta'mir shud*. I sincerely thank Mohammad Mottaghi for bringing this inscription to my attention and sharing his detailed photography. Although extant, it is difficult to discern with the naked eye.

87 For the dome campaign in 1935–6, see Overton 2012A, 65–66.

88 HU/SHN, A1-7-4. As was typical, the lifespan of this new tilework was fleeting. By the 1950s, the portal had readopted the whitewashed look of the early twentieth century, and in 1960, Seyed Husayn Mousavizade oversaw the creation of new *cuerda seca* panels (as documented by his discrete signature). I thank Seyed Masoud Mousavizade for sharing information about his grandfather's efforts, as well as others of the period. For the mosque in ca. 1950–60, see the photographs by the Baroness Marie-Thérèse Ullens de Schooten (Harvard, Ullens Collection, HSM UL95.01514 and HSM UL95.01512).

89 Nyman, "Notes Regarding Nyman Color Photos of Iran," HU/SHN.

90 The dome was again repaired during the reign of Muhammad Reza Shah, as attested by a lengthy repair inscription still extant at the end of the drum's epigraphic band. In orientation and placement, this inscription parallels the 1932–3 example on the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah; however, it is far more detailed and composed in *cuerda seca* (thus paralleling the original band; see Blair 2013, fig. 1.6 and 22). Wheeler Thackston has kindly provided the following reading: *Dar 'asr-i saltanat-i a'lahadrat-i humayun Muhammad Riza Shah-i Pahlavi dimn-i ta'mirat-i asasi-i masjid-i sultani | in katiba ki bar asar-i murur-i zaman qismatha-yi ziyadi az an rikhta va ma'dum shuda bud bi-vasila-i danishmand-i muhtaram | Aqa-yi Jalal-i Huma'i, ustad-i Danishgah-i Tihiran, bi-istifada az baqimanda-i katiba-i qabli takmil va | talfiq gashta taht-i nazar-i Aqa-yi muhandis Ravanbud, ra'is-i bastanshinasi-i Isfahan tahiyya va nasb shud bi-khatt-i aqayan-i Bahaduri musamma bi-raviyyat (?) | 'amal-i Iliya'i kashisaz va Muhammad 'Ali kashitarash, maqdi day mah 1328* (In the reign of His



FIGURE 13.5 *Entrance ivan of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah, Isfahan, with surrounding blank surfaces prior to cuerda seca restoration. The now lost repair inscription commemorating Reza Shah and dated SH Aban 1307/AD October–November 1928 is visible on the vertical axis below the muqarnas. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, A1-7-33 (COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).*



FIGURE 13.6

Craftsman cutting glazed bricks for the restoration of the dome of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, T6-4

(COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).



FIGURE 13.7 *Craftsmen arranging glazed bricks face down on the dome template inside the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, T6-5*
(COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

Concurrent to the repair of the dome, Nyman also photographed the dilapidated and muddled state of its iconic entrance portal. The latter adjective is particularly applicable to the portal's pair of large tile mosaics with Qur'anic verses in radiating cartouches (henceforth 'carpet panels'). In one of Nyman's photographs, the lower half of the left panel consists of square tiles (not the original mosaic technique), while the lower fourth of the right one is completely stripped of tilework exposing the brick substrate (fig. 13.8). Photographs taken by Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) over a decade earlier further confirm the absence of yet another important element from the lower left corner of the right panel: a marble plaque measuring approximately two feet in height with a densely-written inscription in thirteen segments topped by royal emblems (fig. 13.9).⁹¹ The façade once featured two such plaques, each installed in the inner lower corner of a carpet panel, creating a second level of paired symmetry (marble within mosaic). Their inscriptions, which would have been legible to visitors entering the mosque, may have been part of the original endowment text known today only from a summary (*runawisht*) compiled in AH Sha'ban 1023/AD September 1614 by Shaykh Baha' al-Din al-'Amili.⁹² The value of the photographic archive is again underscored.⁹³

In the spring of 1938, within a year of Nyman's documentation described above, yet another individual associated with Pope's Institute focused his lenses on the Masjid-i Shah. In this instance, the photographer/videographer in question was an American collector who had benefited from Nyman's technical advice while also being informed by Pope's purveying of Isfahan's cultural heritage. Whereas Pope had only been able to recreate the Masjid-i Shah's entrance portal in painting and stucco for his 1931 London show, this private collector and his wife determined to transport the mosque's actual tile mosaic

Majesty Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, during renovations to the royal mosque, this inscription, many portions of which had fallen off and been lost with the passage of time, was completed and put together by the respected scholar Mr. Jalal Homa'i, professor at Tehran University, by using the remnants of the former inscription, and was prepared and mounted under the supervision of Mr. Ravanbod, head of antiquities in Isfahan, with the calligraphy of Messrs. Bahadori. . . . Work of Iliya'i, tilemaker, and Mohammad 'Ali, tile cutter. Completed in the month of Day 1328 [AD December 1949–January 1950].

91 For Pope's photographs capturing the plaques in question, and hence paralleling fig. 13.9 here, see Harvard, Pope:023–025, visible online at http://via.lib.harvard.edu/via/deliver/advancedsearch?_collection=via (accessed June 3, 2015).

92 Hunarfar 1971, 431, describes a defaced, large, marble plaque/tablet (*takhta*) once affixed to the west side of the portal (*jilukhan*). Also see Blair 2013, 21.

93 I thank David Hogge for his efforts to enlarge this glass negative for the purpose of reading the inscriptions.

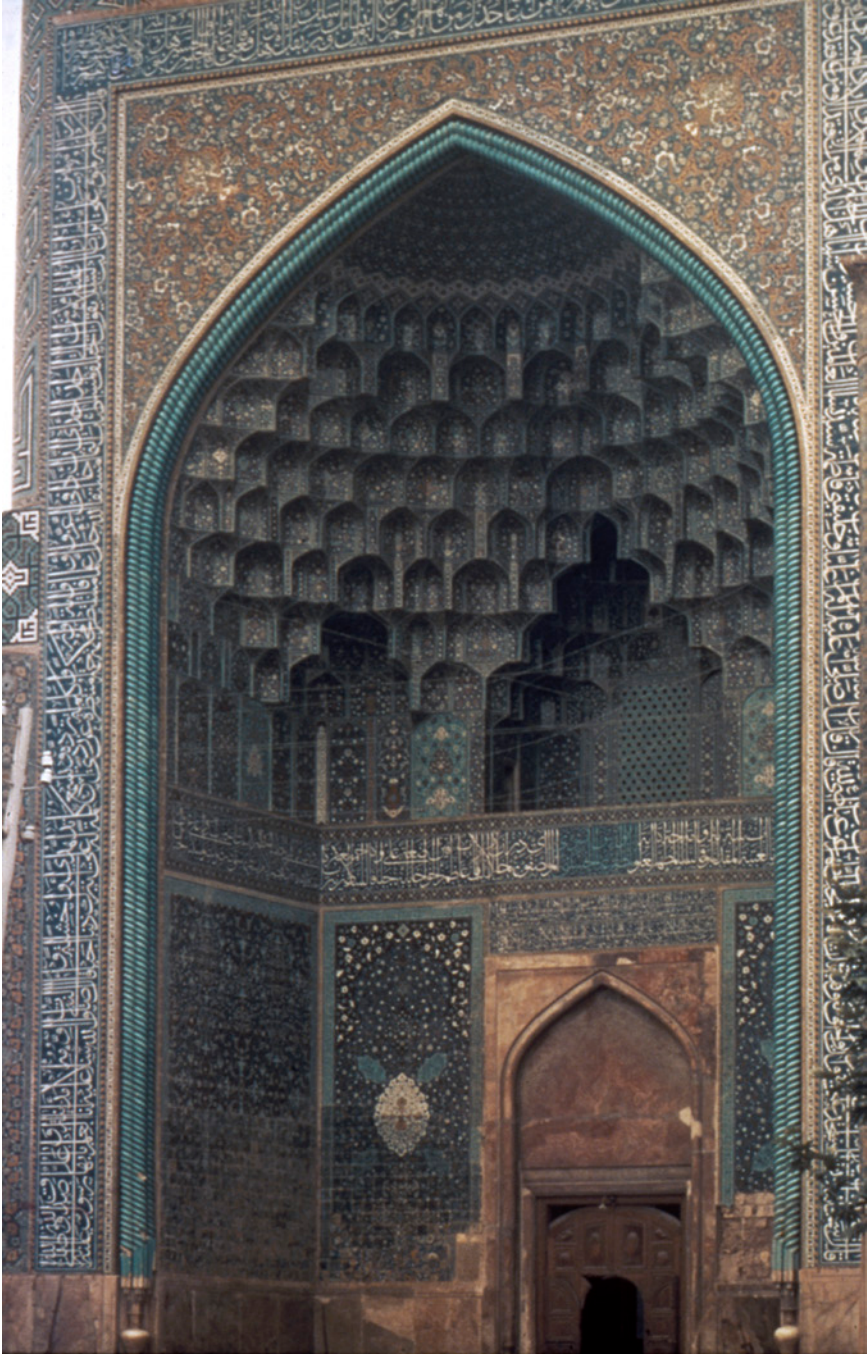


FIGURE 13.8 *Entrance ivan of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan, with the pair of tile mosaic carpet panels before restoration. A marble plaque (originally one of a pair) is visible in the inner corner of the left panel. Photograph by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937, A1-5-2 (COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).*



FIGURE 13.9 *Right side of the entrance ivan of the Masjid-i Shah, Isfahan. A marble plaque (the original endowment text?) is visible in the inner corner of the tile mosaic carpet panel. Photograph by Ernst Herzfeld, ca. 1910, FSA A.6 04.GN.2597. The Ernst Herzfeld papers. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.*

surfaces into their home, albeit in the form of replicas. Fittingly, Nyman would film the creation of this new tilework in Isfahan in 1938–9, and it is to this context of export revivalism that we now turn.

Honolulu: The Collection of Doris Duke Cromwell

In January 1938, the American philanthropist Doris Duke (1912–93) and her husband James Cromwell (1896–1990) became lifetime members of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology.⁹⁴ At the time, they were finishing the construction of their Honolulu home known as Shangri La, whose architecture and collection of Persian art are tangible reflections of the aesthetics espoused by the Society for National Heritage—and globally purveyed by Pope and Nyman—during the early twentieth century. Elsewhere, I have traced how the home's modernist architecture fused with Achaemenid-inspired quotations (stairways, lion sculptures, columns, architraves, entablatures; mostly inspired by Persepolis) constitutes a rare contemporary expression of Tehran's 'Neo' discourse on foreign soil.⁹⁵ Another manifestation of Pahlavi revivalism at Shangri La is the property's substantial corpus of tilework, which was custom-made in Isfahan in 1938–9 and modeled after revetment on Safavid monuments (primarily the Masjid-i Shah and specifically its entrance portal).⁹⁶

Although no evidence has as yet come to light proving that Nyman corresponded directly with the Cromwells, or ever met them in person, his activities and archive can be indirectly linked to the Shangri La project in several ways. A number of references to Nyman appear in correspondence pertaining to Pope's planning of the Cromwells' tour of Iran in March–April 1938. Pope was aware that the couple intended to film and photograph monuments that could later inspire the architecture and surface decoration of their Honolulu home, and to ensure that his technical 'know how' was up-to-date, he solicited Nyman's input: "Please write experiences and advice for taking Kodachrome Persia for use Institute members sailing twenty-sixth also advise relative

94 Letter from John A. Chamberlain, Treasurer, to Mrs. Cromwell [Doris Duke Cromwell], January 26, 1938, Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawaii (hereafter, SLHA).

95 Overton 2012A, 68–74.

96 On these commissions and the associated visual record, see Overton 2012A, 75–79 and Overton 2012B, 110–3.

merits Kodachrome Agfa and Leica.”⁹⁷ Two days later, Pope wrote the following to the Cromwells’ New York secretary:

I have just received a cablegram from our young technical assistant [Nyman] who has just arrived in Berlin from our recent [Eighth Season, Architectural Survey] expedition to Persia. He recommends a Contax as better than a Leica for taking the coloured stills and also for all other purposes. He is confirmed in his advice by the people with whom we deal in Berlin, who are expert and unprejudiced. I judge from his cable that the lenses in the Contax are definitely superior. The Contaflex, however, is too delicate. As for the colour films, he tells us that the Agfa have turned out just as well as the Kodachrome and are, of course, much cheaper. On the other hand, they are very much slower and that is a factor, particularly in taking indoor or flash-light pictures. The expense is trifling, in any case, and I think it would be more practical to use the Kodachrome.⁹⁸

Nyman’s last minute advice—the Cromwells arrived in Iran just two months later—evidently proved useful. During nearly four weeks in Iran, James Cromwell shot high quality photography and film in Isfahan, Mashhad, and the Caspian Sea region.⁹⁹ Some of his efforts must have entailed considerable logistics; when he filmed the entrance portal of the Masjid-i Shah, for example, he was elevated on a ladder. It is doubtful that Cromwell’s documentation would have been possible, or nearly as successful, without Nyman’s earlier trailblazing efforts and the insights he had shared through Pope.

The timing of James Cromwell’s documentation was fortuitous, for it transpired just weeks before the cabinet passed “Regulations Governing Taking Motion Picture Films and Photographs, Painting and Drawing” (May 19, 1938).¹⁰⁰ Not surprisingly, then, Cromwell’s footage is more detailed and idiosyncratic than what appears in Nyman’s heavily censored and often repetitive 1947 films.¹⁰¹ At the Shrine of Imam Reza, Cromwell filmed the gold *ivan* of Mir ‘Ali Shir Nava’i and other architectural details pertinent to Shangri La’s inte-

97 Telegram from Arthur Upham Pope, New York, to Stephen Nyman, Berlin, February 7, 1938, DDCFHA.

98 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope, New York, to Lee Baldwin, New York, February 9, 1938, DDCFHA.

99 For some of Cromwell’s photographs, see Overton 2012A, figs. 9, 11, 17. For his film footage, see “Duke Travel Film,” rolls 37–41 and 44, DDCFHA.

100 Naficy 2011, 171.

101 See page 338.

rior design, including the mirrored vaults of the New Court's arcade, which later inspired the aesthetic of Doris Duke's dressing room. It is from Cromwell's Caspian Sea segment, however, that we most sense that he just averted the stringent regulations of May 1938. In the central square of a village, he filmed several scantily-clad, downtrodden individuals who stand in sharp contrast to the suit-wearing moderns celebrated in Nyman's films as exemplars of Pahlavi "prestige" and "dignity."¹⁰²

While it is possible to glean some major differences between the footage of Nyman and Cromwell, it would be incorrect to presume that the latter collector enjoyed free range to document as he pleased. Instead, he and his wife, known throughout the world for their (her) wealth, appear to have been accompanied by large retinues during some (most?) of their time in Iran. One such group, comprising just under a dozen individuals, welcomed the couple upon their landing in Bushehr (Bushire) and subsequently joined them during a visit to the Shrine of Imam Reza.¹⁰³ Several were high-ranking officials, including founding members of the Society for National Heritage Ibrahim Hakimi and Hussein 'Ala'.¹⁰⁴ The latter was the Minister of Commerce and closely allied with Pope and his Institute's efforts in Iran. In advance of the Cromwells' trip, Pope sent several telegrams to 'Ala' alerting him to the couple's visit and the "valuable opportunity," largely financial, it presented for Iran.¹⁰⁵ Concurrently, Pope provided the Cromwells with a two-paragraph description of the minister lauding him as "one of the outstanding men in Persia today . . . one of the creators of the modern Persia."¹⁰⁶ A decade later, it was 'Ala', by then Iranian

¹⁰² See page 333.

¹⁰³ Final itinerary entitled "Special Flight 'Oeverzhaluw,'" DDCFHA.

¹⁰⁴ For these members of the SNH, see Grigor 2009, 18–19. I am grateful to Talinn Grigor for sharing her thoughts on the identities of several individuals visible in DDCFHA photographs PH.DD159.031 and PH.DD159.015. As a point of comparison, see Grigor 2008, fig. 14 (also Grigor 2014, fig. 5.1).

¹⁰⁵ Western Union Cablegram from "AckerPope" to "His Excellency Ala, Teheran, Iran," January 24, 1938, DDCFHA. A similar telegram was later sent to "His Excellency Soheilli, Iranian Minister, London" on March 24, 1938: "Two members of our Institute Mr. and Mrs. James Cromwell are planning a trip to Persia this spring in order to secure tiles fabrics other modern Persian arts and crafts for the Great Mansion they are building in Persian style in view of their prestige believe opportunity really important much in Persia's interest to facilitate trip in every way."

¹⁰⁶ Arthur Upham Pope, "Note on some of the personalities in Persia," DDCFHA. This list also included 'Ali Asghar Hekmat, Minister of Education, Hussein Tahirzadeh Behzad (see pages 342–3), Muhammed 'Ali Foroughi (noted as "not in favor at present with the Shah"), and Governor Pakravan of Khorasan (the key contact for visiting the Shrine of

ambassador to the United States, who provided the final stamp of approval for Nyman's copyrighted films (see the opening frames).

Another key individual who accompanied the Cromwells on the ground in Iran was Mary Crane, the aforementioned American graduate student and Institute field agent. After the Iran trip, Crane continued to advise the Cromwells on the integration of Persian architectural elements into Shangri La, and she often provided them with unpublished drawings and photographs amassed during the Architectural Surveys.¹⁰⁷ To convey examples of wood columns that could be used in Shangri La's courtyard, for example, she supplied a Nyman photograph of the interior of the mosque in the Bayazid shrine complex in Bastam.¹⁰⁸ In addition to capturing prototype columns, this print provides a contextual glimpse of the stucco mihrab signed Muhammad ibn al-Hussein.¹⁰⁹

Nyman's most important legacy in regards to Shangri La was his documentation of the property's tile commissions in progress in Isfahan in 1938–9 (fig. 13.10 shows, in part, the manufacture of DDFIA 48.93, a 20-foot-tall commission inspired by one of the carpet panels on the entrance of the Masjid-i Shah).¹¹⁰ This visual record (film and photography) has been introduced elsewhere, but for the purposes here, it is useful to reiterate two key points.¹¹¹ First, a significant degree of overlap existed between the restoration of historic tilework in Isfahan and the production of new mosaic for domestic and foreign patrons; in other words, the Safavid icons deemed worthy of repair were concurrently desirable for imitation in new modes and contexts and to varying degrees of fidelity. Two examples illustrate these intersections: the incremental restoration of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah between ca. 1928 and 1936 paralleled its dome's quotation in Reza Shah's Marble Palace (1934), and the Cromwells'

Imam Reza). The Cromwells presumably met some or all of these individuals during their trip. Pope also recommended that the "young Feroughi" accompany the couple for the duration to handle various logistics.

107 On Crane's contributions to Shangri La's "Persianization," see Overton 2012A, 70–74.

108 Nyman's initials are on the verso of the print.

109 For this small mosque, and the location of the mihrab in question, see the bottom of the floor plan reproduced in Blair 1986, fig. 7 (I thank the author for various clarifications); also see SPA, vol. 2, fig. 388 and 1080–1. Pope's *Survey* photograph of the mihrab (pl. 393) focuses on it exclusively, whereas Nyman's image captures its architectural context, one that is generally understood from much later photographs.

110 Fig. 13.10 here and a second contact sheet in the Harvard archive (1996.17969) also capture additional Shangri La commissions, including DDFIA 48.407 and 48.458.1–2.

111 Overton 2012A, 78–79.



FIGURE 13.10 *Contact sheet of photographs of historical monuments in Isfahan and Mashhad and the manufacture of mosaic tilework, including the Shangri La commissions. Photographs by Stephen H. Nyman, 1937–8, 1996.17968 (COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).*

commissioning of tilework inspired by the Masjid-i Shah corresponded with the repairs of the precise Safavid prototypes. Indeed, when James Cromwell filmed the upper edges of the portal's carpet panels from atop a ladder in April 1938, it is likely that their lower zones were being (or soon to be) repaired by Ustads Ghaffar and Nasrallah, who had earlier (1935–6) restored the dome of the Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah.¹¹²

The second point to emphasize is that the Shangri La tile commissions, despite originating as a private commission for reclusive patrons, provided an exceptional opportunity for Pope, Nyman, Ayoub Rabenou (the dealer in charge of the order), 'Ala', and the Society for National Heritage at large to market Iranian 'crafts' in revivalist modes to global audiences. While panning over the manufacture of DDFIA 48.93 in "The Art of Persia," Nyman identifies "Doris Duke Cromwell" as the patron, thereby lending her a degree of prominence also afforded to Hussein Tahirzadeh Behzad and Hussein Behzad Miniatur in the same film. Together, collector, educator/artist and painter fueled the marketing machine and commercial agendas of the Pope/Nyman/Rabenou/SNH network.¹¹³ That the Cromwells themselves were deeply informed by this network's aesthetics is further confirmed by their acquisition of the precise types of objects celebrated in "The Art of Persia." Concurrent to the tile commissions, the couple also purchased khatamkari boxes and lacquer furnishings in Safavid revivalist modes.¹¹⁴

112 See page 349. A small signature cartouche on the lower edge of the left carpet panel reads '*amal-i Nasrallah tarah va Ghaffar kashitarash Isfahani*'. Nyman's photographs confirm the completion of these repairs (with signature, and resulting in the removal of the marble plaques visible in figs. 13.8–9) no later than 1942 (see HU/SHN, A1-5-29). It is likely that they were underway in 1938–9, hence concurrent to the Shangri La commissions.

113 Pope's comments on Hussein Tahirzadeh Behzad in his "Note on some of the personalities" (see footnote 105) underscore his biases: "His taste is a little limited as is inevitable . . . the tragedy of Persian Art is that those who are trying to revive it today have been for the most part nourished on only the inferior, lesser material of the last century or two . . . Behzad has had insufficient chance to travel. His artistic ideals are 16th and 17th century. The material that he is weaving on his looms is nearly all 18th century in style, and by no means the finest . . . Designs that he might prepare for you ought, if there were time, to be submitted to us in the Institute for criticism."

114 Consider 65.9 (lacquer table acquired at Sotheby's Parke Bernet), 64.60a-b (lacquer doors purchased from H. Khan Monif; reproduced in Daftari and Diba 2013, fig. 21), and 67.46-48a-b (khatamkari boxes bought from Rabenou). The collection also includes a Hussein Behzad tinted drawing of a woman presenting a cup to a man (11.26) and a related Khoshneviszadeh of figures in a landscape (11.16)—both of the type of Neo-Safavid works highlighted in "The Art of Persia"—but their provenance is unknown. The former's signature reads "Behzad," and the letters *hi*, *bi*, and *mim* appear below separated by periods

The Purveying of Medieval Persian Ceramics and Tilework

In addition to documenting the contemporary production of tile mosaic, carpets, painting, and woodwork—particularly in Safavid revivalist modes—Pope, Nyman and their Iranian associates devoted considerable attention to the ceramic arts of Iran's Seljuk and Ilkhanid periods. After a section dealing with Luristan bronzes, "The Art of Persia" introduces the history of Persian ceramics with a discussion of the overglaze techniques of mina'i and luster. Regarding vessels from the Mortimer Schiff (1877–1931) collection, Nyman exclaims, "Royal wares, gay, charming, delicate, reflecting the luxury of the court at the beginning of the 13th century, decorated by textile designers and manuscript illuminators, they are the only record of their art."¹¹⁵

The film's emphasis on luster and mina'i paralleled scholarly and commercial interests of the day. In 1936, Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79) published a seminal article on Kashan lusterware, and two years later, the *Survey* included Pope's lengthy four-part chapter entitled "The Ceramic Arts."¹¹⁶ This chapter featured an incomparable 250 plates; fifty alone were dedicated to the "Kashan Lustre Style," and mina'i was also reproduced in large numbers.¹¹⁷ While some of the mina'i objects were owned by museums (Freer Gallery of Art, British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum), the majority were in the hands of dealers (Dikran Kelekian [1868–1951], Parish-Watson, Rabenou) and private collectors and sponsors associated with Pope's Institute (Mortimer Schiff, Edward M. M. Warburg). A number of exceptional vessels were reproduced (Freer beaker, pl. 660B, F.1928.2; Parish-Watson bowl signed by Abu Zayd and dated AH 583/

(standing for Hussein Behzad Miniatur). Duke's interest in Safavid revivalism persisted for a lifetime, as attested by her important copy of a Chihil Sutun wall painting dated AH Sha'ban 1203/AD April–May 1789 (34.10), which was acquired at auction in 1989. I thank Dawn Sueoka for clarifications on these acquisitions.

115 Mortimer Schiff acquired many of his Seljuk ceramics from Parish-Watson; see Riefstahl 1922. Upon Schiff's death in 1931, his collection passed to his son, John M. Schiff (1904–87). Many Schiff pieces were eventually gifted and sold to the Metropolitan. Visible in "The Art of Persia" segment (4:95–5:20) are MMA 57.36.5, 57.36.12, 57.36.4, 57.36.11, and 57.36.15. For a recent conservation project examining some of these objects, see Jean-Francois de Laperouse, "Examination and Conservation of Mina'i Ceramics," <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2013/invisible-visible/minai-ceramics> (accessed October 23, 2014).

116 Ettinghausen 1936. For a review of Pope's essay, see Florence E. Day in *Ars Islamica* (partially reprinted in *Surveyors*, 308–9).

117 McWilliams 2003, 243.

AD 1187, pl. 686, later MMA 64.178.2), but many weak and overrestored examples were also included.

Given the rising popularity of overglaze Persian ceramics in international collecting and academic circles, it is not surprising that the Cromwells also turned their eye toward them. Between 1937 and 1938, the couple purchased twelve vessels (mina'i, luster, or a combination of the two; all bowls, with the exception of one ewer and one figural piece). The majority (seven) were acquired from Hassan K. Monif (Persian Antique Gallery, 645 Madison Avenue), four were purchased from Rabenou, and two from Ove V. Nilsson. The three most expensive Monif bowls reflected the erroneous thinking of the day: "Nos. 526, 527, & 529, were excavated from Rhages [Rayy], ancient capital of Persia, or Iran, Rhages was entirely [*sic*] destroyed during the invasion of Moughuls in 1221, All 3 were found at the destroyed Royal Palace."¹¹⁸

In 1938, Pope approached the Cromwells as Rabenou's agent for the sale of a mina'i bowl depicting Majnun (DDFIA 48.338), for which he provided the following guarantee: "a genuine and authentic piece from the Kashan workshops of approximately the first quarter of the thirteenth century."¹¹⁹ After the couple had purchased it, he wrote, "I am very glad Mrs. Cromwell likes the bowl. It really is one of the world's finest and in remarkable condition considering that all these things are fished up in little bits. I think I would rather have it myself than any other polychrome Persian bowl I know, with the possible exception of Edsel Ford's, which is generally thought to have stood him a good \$50,000 . . . Please thank Mrs. Cromwell for the permission to publish it."¹²⁰ In 2002, in light of possible exhibition, the Majnun bowl was disassembled and over half of its 70 pieces were found to be 'new' (early twentieth century).¹²¹ In the 1930s, a 'complete' bowl was a far more attractive commodity than individual fragments, which are increasingly exhibited in today's museums, a prime example being the Louvre's recently (2012) renovated Arts of Islam galleries.

118 See Watson 1985, 37–44, for his challenge of Rayy as a production site for luster. He concludes, "The evidence for the attribution of lustre wares to Kashan is overwhelming, while evidence for attribution to other sites [Rayy, Sava, etc.] is meager in the extreme . . . In the present state of our knowledge we are able to identify with certainty only one site—Kashan—as a producer of lustre ware."

119 "Guarantee . . . Personnages Bowl with the Leila Majnun scene," signed by Arthur Upham Pope, September 28, 1938, SLHA.

120 Letter from Arthur Upham Pope, New York, to Mr. James H. R. Cromwell, New York, October 4, 1938, SLHA. For the *Survey*'s color reproduction of the Ford bowl, see vol. 6, pl. 651.

121 The author was not part of the 2002 assessment and has not personally examined the bowl's individual pieces, which were reconstituted as a 'complete' object.

In 1940, a number of mina'i and luster vessels were included in Pope and Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977)'s New York exhibition "Six Thousand Years of Persian Art," which featured over two thousand objects mostly from American and Canadian collections. Highlights included the Varamin mihrab dated AH Sha'ban 663/AD May 1265 and signed 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir (then Hagop Kevorkian [1872–1962]; now DDFIA 48.327) and the Ardabil carpet (then J. Paul Getty [1892–1976]; now LACMA 53.50.2.).¹²² In his review of the show, Ettinghausen was most positive about the textiles, metalwork and miniatures. Regarding the ceramics, however, he observed, "Occasionally, too many (and too many overrestored) pieces especially of the Mina'i wares were put in one case and competed with each other to their own disadvantage."¹²³ A similar warning would soon be sounded by Arthur Lane: "Unfortunately, the overglaze colours can be very well imitated by skillful forgers so that the more obviously expensive *minai* pieces, sometimes furnished with 'interesting' dated inscriptions, are apt to engender more than aesthetic uneasiness."¹²⁴

A few months after the New York exhibition, Doris Duke asked Mary Crane to handle the restoration of a luster bowl (DDFIA 48.148) that had broken in transit from Tehran to Honolulu. This large vessel, featuring two confronted figures and ostensibly dating to the thirteenth century, had been purchased from Rabenou in 1938. After examining it, Crane offered the following conclusion:

I have examined the bowl carefully, and I regret to inform you that it cannot be considered an authentic product of the XIIIth century. In several places, the thickness of the bowl consists of two layers, glued together; the bowl has been recomposed of a series of fragments of a number of individual luster bowls, and the interstices filled in with plaster. Though the pieces of which the bowl is formed are genuinely old, the resulting agglomeration of originally unrelated pieces cannot be considered an authentic XIIIth century object . . . the bowl must be considered solely as a decorative piece, and not as an object of mediaeval Persian art.¹²⁵

Despite a degree of bad luck with overglaze portable objects in the late 1930s, Doris Duke's fortunes with medieval Persian ceramic arts soon improved

¹²² Ackerman 1940.

¹²³ Ettinghausen 1940, 112.

¹²⁴ Lane 1947, 42.

¹²⁵ Letter from Mary E. Crane, New York, to Mrs. Cromwell, Duke Farms, Somerville, NJ, October 28, 1940, DDCFHA. For luster vessels of a similar size and shape, see McCarthy and Holod 2012, table 1.

exponentially. Pope and Ackerman's 1940 New York exhibition had included a number of important ensembles of Ilkhanid tilework from the collection of Hagop Kevorkian, including the aforementioned Varamin mihrab, a tomb cover dated AH Rabi' II 713/AD July 1313, and a set of ten inscription frieze tiles signed Yusuf ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Tahir (the son of the potter who made the Varamin mihrab). By the end of 1940, thanks in large part to what Kevorkian described as "the persistent efforts of Miss Crane [Mary Crane]," all three had entered Duke's collection.¹²⁶

While Duke's notable acquisitions of Ilkhanid tilework did not transpire directly through Pope, he and his colleagues had set the stage for the marketing and appreciation of large-scale Persian tilework on foreign soil. Pope's 1931 London exhibition had included the Madrasa Imami mosaic mihrab dated AH 755/AD 1354–5 (MMA 39.20), a "Tiled Room," and a recreation of the Masjid-i Shah's entrance portal, all of which accustomed popular taste to Iran's ceramic surfaces.¹²⁷ In the ensuing years, Pope highlighted architectural tilework in his photography exhibitions (recall the Harvard prints), and in the 1938–9 *Survey*, he reproduced several outstanding ceramic mihrabs, including the Madrasa Imami mosaic example, the Varamin luster one, and two additional in situ mosaic ensembles (pls. 402, 400, 401, 403, respectively). Two years later, the Varamin mihrab was lauded as the highlight of the 1940 New York exhibition.¹²⁸

In some ways, Duke's purchase of the Varamin mihrab shortly after the New York show marked the terminus of a nearly century-long process (ca. 1860–1940) of the "organized pillaging" of Iran's tilework, and its subsequent display and sale in Europe and the United States.¹²⁹ Pope's role in this

126 Letter from H. Kevorkian, New York, to Mrs. Cromwell, December 28, 1940, DDCFHA. For further information on these objects, visit "Collection Highlights: Tilework: Ilkhanid Iran," Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (Overton), 2012, <http://www.shangrila.hawaii.org/Islamic-Art-Collection/Collection-Highlights/Tileworks/Ilkhanid-Iran/> (accessed November 5, 2013).

127 On the Madrasa Imami mihrab, see Ekhtiar et al. 2011, no. 81, 124–6. For an analysis of the 1931 exhibition, see Wood 2000 ("Mosaic Faience Mihrab," "Model of the Portal of the Masjid-i Shah," and "Tiled Room" are all highlighted on the floor plan reproduced as fig. 2). It is important to reiterate that Pope's 1931 model of the portal of the Masjid-i Shah was not the first attempt to replicate and export alternative forms of Isfahan's tiled surfaces. Recall the full-size painted copies of Safavid tilework commissioned by Robert Murdoch Smith in 1877 (Carey 2014).

128 See, for example, Ettinghausen 1940, 112.

129 Quoted from Masuya 2000, 41. For the provenance of the DDFIA mihrab and its "mates," also see Blair 2014. The biography of the Berlin mihrab (Museum für Islamische Kunst,

"pillaging" remains to be clarified, as does his level of complicity in the marketing of vessels known to have been fraudulently recomposed and/or repainted for sale as "genuine and authentic."¹³⁰ The evidence for the latter is circumstantial, albeit damning: Pope worked closely with Rabenou, Rabenou sold Duke two ceramic "agglomerations" (to borrow Crane's term), Pope served as the agent for one of these sales (*mina'i Majnun*), Rabenou operated a store/workshop in Paris where he received clients shepherded by Pope (like the Cromwells), and artisans affiliated with the Paris workshop were known for skillful restorations during the 1920s and 1930s.¹³¹

Just as the continual restoration of tilework on historical monuments was a given in early-twentieth-century Iran, so too was the repair of portable ceramic objects for export and sale. Amongst collectors like the Cromwells, the taste for medieval *mina'i* and luster was seemingly insatiable and surely influenced by Pope and Nyman's marketing campaigns. The reality of demand outweighing supply stimulated widespread restoration to varying degrees of transparency, complexity, and success. In some cases, the repairs were lackluster, discernible, minimal, and/or benign. In others, 'restoration' entailed the reconstitution of complete vessels out of original yet often disparate fragments, generally combined with plaster fills (Crane's "agglomerations"). Some of the latter demonstrate the exemplary skills of Pahlavi potters and deserve sustained scientific analysis to determine the extent of restoration and its impact on the painted surface and overall integrity of the object.¹³²

1 5366) is particularly illuminating. It was removed from the Kashan mosque by 1898 and subsequently entered the collection of Major John Richard Preece (1843–1917). The majority of large-scale tilework elements (*mihhrabs*, tombstones, *spandrels*) in museum collections were acquired before the mid-twentieth century.

130 See page 362.

131 A cablegram from Pope to Rabenou on January 24, 1938 advised the dealer to prepare examples of old and new mosaic for the Cromwells' viewing in his Paris store/workshop (14, Rue Saulnier); see Overton 2012A, 75. For an early reference to the Paris workshop, see Lane 1947, 3 (also cited in McWilliams 2003, 250, fn. 27).

132 As in McCarthy and Holod 2012, which examines the reconstituted "Freer Siege Scene Plate" (F1943.3) and illuminates repair processes observed by Mary Crane's astute eye as early as 1940 (see page 363). The authors conclude, "The examination has established that, in addition to the plaster fill material applied as part of the repairs, the individual sherds used to reconstitute the plate came from several different sources. Many are from the original plate, to be sure, but others were chosen to match adjacent ornaments as closely as possible, at times completing or enhancing a design... Also, in some places restorers inlaid a half-thickness sherd with an approximately matching motif." Despite this

In late 1940, while Mary Crane negotiated Duke's purchase of the Varamin mihrab from Kevorkian, Stephen H. Nyman and his American travel companions fled Iran for India. Nyman spent the next year in India doing similar documentary work, and by June 1942, he had returned to Iran. This essay has neither considered the material that Nyman gathered in Central Asia and India nor the photographs and film he shot for three additional decades in Iran.¹³³ It is hoped, nonetheless, that it has introduced a new lens through which to consider Pope and the American Institute's activities in Iran in the 1930s and early 1940s, the era during which much of the canon of Persian art was formed and both notable and problematic works of art entered private and public collections. Nyman's contributions deserve consideration within Pope's shadow, and it is anticipated that his Harvard archive will prove useful for both historiographic and material-based scholarship of the future.

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reconstruction, McCarthy and Holod confirm the originality of the plate's main iconography and inscription and therefore reveal that some agglomerations can preserve the integrity of the object (begging a possible reassessment of DDFIA 48.148 and other comparable "fakes").

- 133 The latter includes Nyman's continued documentation of tile mosaic production, including the revetment for the Iranian Embassy in Washington, DC, whose interiors featured dado panels comparable to those in Pope's "Tiled Room" of 1931 London (also PMA 1931-76-1); see Overton 2014.

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PART 5

Arthur Upham Pope: His Legacy





FIGURE 14.1 *A Survey of Persian Art on the shelf in the reading room of the Department of the Arts of Asia in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*
(PHOTOGRAPH © JONATHAN BLOOM AND SHEILA BLAIR).

Surveying Persian Art in Light of *A Survey of Persian Art*

Sheila S. Blair

A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present, originally published by Oxford University Press in 1938–9 under the editorship of Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) and Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977), shaped the study of Persian art and architecture. The publication was a monumental achievement as well as a mirror of its own time. This chapter investigates not only how the *Survey*'s treatment of Iranian art and architecture reflected contemporary politics, economics, and society, but also how the *Survey* has continued to affect the study of Persian art and architecture, which in turn still reflect contemporary concerns.

The Original Edition of A Survey of Persian Art

The original publication of the *Survey* (fig. 14.1) comprised six folio volumes, each measuring 39 cm (15 inches) in height and containing 2,800 pages, 1,500 plates (200 in color, the rest in collotype), and 1,800 drawings. The set sold for \$210, the equivalent in 2011 of \$3,300 using the Consumer Price Index.¹ On October 11, 2005, Christie's offered an original set for sale in London (sale 7077): estimated to sell for £3–5000 (\$5,244–8,740), the sale realized double that amount (£9,000 or \$15,732, including the buyer's premium).² In September 2010 when I prepared this topic for presentation in Chicago, an original set of the *Survey* was offered for sale on the web by Zubal Books in Cleveland for \$2,214.60; nine months later in July 2011 when I prepared the written draft, the price from the same dealer had doubled to \$4,434.09. The fluctuation in prices alone shows how the *Survey*'s popularity waxes and wanes.

The 1938–9 original edition of the *Survey* included the work of seventy-two collaborators from sixteen countries, although one should note that the

1 Relative values calculated in July 2011 from measuringworth.com. Using the relative share of GDP, it was the equivalent \$33,400.

2 http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=4579919 (accessed April 16, 2015). I thank Yuka Kadoi for this reference.

editors, Pope and Ackerman, wrote fully one-half of the entries. According to an article published in *Time Magazine* on January 23, 1939 to celebrate the publication, the *Survey* was “the handsomest treatment in print of any art tradition,” taking twelve and a half years to prepare and costing \$265,000 (the equivalent in 2011 of more than \$4 million using the Consumer Price Index).³ Originally slated for 1931 to coincide with the splendid exhibition of Persian art that Pope and others had arranged at Burlington House in London, publication was half a decade late, a delay indicative of the financial crisis in the 1930s and of the freelancer Pope’s constant need to find alternative sources of income.⁴ To see just how hefty a publication the *Survey* was, one needs to look only at its weight: its 25 kilos (55 lbs) make ordinary shelves sag, as in the case with the copy in the reading room of the department of the Art of Asia in the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Boston (fig. 14.1).

The text of this monumental work was divided evenly between text and illustration, with three volumes of text followed by three volumes of plates. The first volume of text covered pre-Islamic times, subdivided dynastically into the pre-Achaemenid, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian periods. The other two volumes treated works of Islamic art: volume two covered architecture, ceramics, calligraphy, and epigraphy; volume three, the arts of the book, textiles, carpets, metalwork, and minor arts. The three volumes of plates were arranged similarly, thereby making it convenient for readers to consult companion volumes of text and plates, and indeed this is the order in which the MFA has arranged its copy on the shelf, with a volume with text followed by the corresponding volume of plates.

The title page of the original edition of the *Survey* shows that the work was published under the auspices of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, an organization that Pope had founded in New York in 1928.⁵

3 <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,760638,00.html> (accessed April 16, 2015). It was equivalent to \$42 million using the relative share of GDP. Not all reviewers were so panegyric: see the scathing reviews in *Ars Islamica*, vol. 8 (1941) by contemporary scholars, many of whom had either not been asked or refused to contribute to the *Survey*, and the responses by Pope and Eric Schroeder in *Ars Islamica*, vol. 9 (1942), 169–208, and 208–17, respectively.

4 On the 1931 exhibition, see Wood 2000; on Pope’s career, see Jonathan Bloom’s chapter in this volume.

5 On the founding of the Institute, see *Surveyors*, 142–7. Originally called the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology, under whose auspices four volumes of a *Bulletin* were published between 1931 and 1936, the name was then changed to the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, which published volume 5 of the *Bulletin* in 1937–8. This change was necessitated by Reza Shah Pahlavi’s order that the name ‘Iran’ replace ‘Persia’ in foreign usage. Then it became the Asia Institute, first in New York and then in Shiraz. See

Page ix lists the various sponsors of the original edition.⁶ Iranians head the list. His Majesty Reza Pahlavi (r. 1925–41) is first, his importance as ruler of Iran indicated by the capital letters used for his name. Next come two of his government officials: ‘Ali Ashgar Hekmat (1892–1980), Minister of Education, and Mirza Hussein ‘Ala’ (1882–1964), foreign minister in London. The fourth sponsor was the Anjamen Meli Iran, the Society for National Heritage in Tehran, an organization established in 1922 and dedicated to reshaping Iran’s contemporary image by rebuilding and even reinventing its glorious past.⁷ The *Survey* was thus linked with the Iranian government’s quest to use art and architecture to build a case for nationalism.⁸

The remaining sponsors of the *Survey* comprise twenty-nine Europeans and Americans, a veritable *Who’s Who* of politicians and patrons influential in the Middle East and art world during the 1930s. Many also had close ties to Pope. Three were Europeans. Sir Arnold Wilson (1884–1940) was a colonial administrator and politician who had served as British civil commissioner in Baghdad from 1918 to 1920, but fell out with Gertrude Bell (1868–1929) over British policy toward Iraq. He left the Civil Service to become resident director in Persia for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company before being elected to Parliament in 1933.⁹ He represents the business, specifically oil, interests in the region and the close political and financial ties between Iran and Britain.

The second British sponsor was Joseph Lord Duveen (1869–1939), the art dealer and benefactor who had realized vast profits by channeling major paintings and other works of art from an economically pressed Europe to an avid buyer’s market that he created among established American millionaires and the newly rich. He was also a director of the Institute for Persian art that Pope had founded in New York in 1928. Duveen personifies the connection between art and money.

The third European on the list was French, but with close ties to America: Louis J. Cartier (1875–1942), grandson of the founder of the jewelry firm Cartier Inc. and for many years head of its Paris branch.¹⁰ In the winter of 1940, just after publication of the *Survey*, he emigrated from France to the United States. A major collector of Persian illustrated manuscripts, he had been a chief contributors to the exhibition of Islamic painting held at the Metropolitan

Richard Frye, “Asia Institute”, and “Asia Institute, Bulletin of”, in *EIr*. To simplify, I refer to it here as the or Pope’s “Institute.” The *Survey*’s title page is illustrated in Rizvi 2009, fig. 8.

6 Rizvi 2009, fig. 9.

7 Grigor 2009. The names listed here were spelled on the title page of the original edition as: Riza Pahlavi, Ali Ashgar Hekmat, and Hussein Ala.

8 On this topic, see Abdi 2001 and Rizvi 2007.

9 “Wilson, Sir Arnold Talbot”, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

10 Obituary in *New York Times*, Friday July 24, 1942.

Museum of Art in 1933.¹¹ He exemplifies the rich collector whose treasures were gradually shifting west across the Atlantic.

By far the majority of the patrons of the original *Survey* were Americans, showing where the money was in the 1930s. One couple, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Jackson Holmes, came from Boston. A lawyer from a prominent Boston family, Edward Holmes (1873–1950) became successively the director, the president, and a trustee of the Museum of Fine Arts there.¹² He was a client of Pope's and a member of the board of directors of Pope's Institute. Holmes donated his copy of the *Survey* to the MFA; it is the one still on the shelf in the Asia Department there.

Several months before his death on May 29, 1950, Holmes had attended the opening of the great exhibition of Persian art that Pope had mounted to coincide with the inaugural visit of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1941–79) to the United States during the last six weeks of 1949.¹³ Following an official reception by President Truman in Washington, DC, the Shah toured the country, visiting various military and industrial installations. He then went to New York City to inaugurate several exhibitions of Persian art, thereby underscoring the ties between art and politics. The Metropolitan Museum hosted an exhibition of more than one hundred masterpieces brought specially from Iran, ranging from recently excavated archaeological material such as gold jewelry and ornaments from the palace treasury of Artaxerxes III to Qur'an and illustrated manuscripts from the Shrine of Imam Reza at Mashhad. The works were exhibited under the custody of Dr. Mehdi Bahrani (1905–51), director of the Archaeological Museum in Tehran.

On November 24, three days after the Metropolitan gala, the Shah presided over the opening of another exhibition at Pope's Institute containing works of Persian art drawn from public and private collections. The Shah's entourage of fifteen included Hussein 'Ala', one of the sponsors of the *Survey* and at this point Ambassador of Iran to the US; other attendees were various American lenders to the exhibition like Holmes. Following the New York venues, the Iranian objects and some of the ones from the Institute were shown in Boston from February 8 to March 26, 1950, along with several fine metalwares that

11 Dimand 1933, which mentions specifically Cartier's splendid Timurid copy of Nizami's *Khamasa* and his portrait of Sultan Husayn Mirza.

12 Obituary by Edward W. Forbes in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, 48/274 (December 1950), 87–88. On Holmes, see Weinstein's chapter in this volume.

13 Details of the exhibition in *Surveyors*, 386–8. The Shah arrived in the US on November 16 and was welcomed by President Truman; he departed on December 30, 1949; photographs of the visit from the Truman Presidential Library are available at http://www.parstimes.com/history/shah_us/ (accessed April 16, 2015).

Holmes had lent or given to the MFA, many of them in turn acquired through Pope.¹⁴ Pope was thus the glue that held together these various activities on Persian art.

While Boston had been at the forefront of collecting Persian art in the earlier twentieth century, by the mid-century much of the money and patronage was elsewhere, a shift presaged in the connections of the other American sponsors of the *Survey*. The three individuals or couples from Washington, DC, reflect a judicious balance of art and politics: the Hon. Robert Woods Bliss (1875–1962), a career diplomat and founder of Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, DC, and his wife; George Hewitt Myers (1875–1957), philanthropist and founder of the Textile Museum there; and the Hon. Franklin Mott Gunther (1885–1941), US ambassador to Egypt and then Romania, and president of Pope's Institute. Three more from Chicago mixed art and industry: Frank O. Logan (1851–1937), Henry J. Patten (d. 1938), and Martin A. Ryerson (1856–1932) were Illinois tycoons who jointly founded the Art Institute of Chicago and sponsored a fund there for the acquisition of 'Muhammadan art', with Pope serving as advisory curator.¹⁵

Reflecting its position as economic capital of America in the 1930s, New York was by far the most important site, home of nine of the original donors to the *Survey*. Two representative patrons can stand here for the group and illustrate the role that wealthy women played in Pope's activities. One was Mrs. Grace Rainey Rogers (1867–1943), daughter of a Cleveland industrialist who had made a fortune in the coke industry and heir of her brother, the millionaire playboy and big-game hunter Paul J. Rainey.¹⁶ She had been one of the founders of the Cleveland Museum of Art, but after she moved to New York, she also became a major donor to the Metropolitan, known best for her eponymous auditorium, site of many major cultural events today. A collector of Persian art and a client of Pope's, she had lent several objects to the 1931 exhibition at Burlington House.

Another prominent female donor from New York was Mrs. William H. Moore (1858–1955).¹⁷ She was the widow of the industrialist William Henry Moore (1848–1923), a judge and horseman who had been one of the first and

14 Bahrami 1950; Forbes 1950.

15 See Kadoi's chapter in this volume. Curiously, Frank Logan's middle initial is misprinted: he was Frank G. Logan; the dedicatory page to the *Survey* gives Frank O. Logan, a mistake that was repeated in all the reprints.

16 Obituary in *New York Times*, May 11, 1943. His sister commissioned the Rainey Memorial Gates at the New York Zoological Park as a memorial to him.

17 Obituary in *New York Times*, January 31, 1955; *Surveyors*, 238–42; Sensabaugh and Matheson 2002.

most successful people to enact corporate mergers and whose companies were folded in US Steel.¹⁸ He hated to travel, and after his death his widow became an inveterate tourist, immortalized on her 1934 trip to Iran by Robert Byron, who described how Pope came to Iran in an airplane with Mrs. Moore, “a matriarch in a shawl, more than seventy years old and worth as many millions.”¹⁹ A generous patron of the arts, she underwrote excavations at Persepolis and amassed a large collection of Asian art, most of it donated to Yale University, from which her husband and son had graduated. She too supported Pope’s Institute, and from her good friends Pope and Ackerman, she had acquired a large group of Persian textiles and other arts, such as an ‘Abbasid tin-glazed bowl illustrated as a full-page color plate in the *Survey*.²⁰

Many of these sponsors of the *Survey* were thus Pope’s clients in his art business, their wares shown in the *Survey* and in the exhibitions he organized. Pope’s study and publication of Persian art were therefore intertwined with politics and economics in both Iran and America, and such a melding of interests continues to this day.

The Second Edition of A Survey of Persian Art

The year following the publication of the *Survey*, 1939–40, marked the ninth and last of Pope’s official expeditions to photograph and record monuments in Iran. These expeditions, like much of the *Survey*, were part of the concerted program to enhance nationalism in Iran that had been adopted by Reza Shah, founder of the Pahlavi dynasty.²¹ The Shah had been inspired in part by a stirring lecture Pope had given to the Society for National Heritage in Tehran on April 22, 1925 on “The Past and Future of Persian Art.”²² It opened with a mini-version of the *Survey*: an overview of Iranian art from Achaemenid and Sasanian to Islamic times and its contribution to world civilization. Pope then went on to stress the role of kings as patrons and to argue that Iran’s political elite was fundamental in spurring an artistic and cultural revival there. Though presented in English, the lecture was simultaneously translated into Persian to reach the large local audience, including Reza Khan (he assumed the title Shah only at the end of the year) and his ministers.

18 Obituary in *New York Times*, January 12, 1923.

19 Byron 1966, 194, cited in *Surveyors*, 256, as Bryon 1937, 218–9.

20 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, pl. 571.

21 Abdi 2001.

22 Reprinted in *Surveyors*, 93–110; its impact in Abdi, 2001, 60–61 and Grigor 2009, 27–30.

Reza Shah had actively promoted art and architecture throughout his reign, which ended abruptly the year following Pope's ninth expedition, when a joint Anglo-British invasion of Iran forced the ruler to abdicate on September 16, 1941. The ostensible reason was that Reza Shah might align his petroleum-rich company with Nazi Germany, but the underlying cause was to prevent him from using his country as a corridor to supply the Russians. Reza Shah was forced into exile in Mauritius and then South Africa, where he died in 1944. He was succeeded by his 21-year-old son, Muhammad Reza Shah, installed on the throne by British and other outside forces.

In the early 1950s Iran was shaken by political crisis. Under the popular Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadegh, parliament voted to nationalize the oil industry, thereby shutting out the Anglo-Iranian oil company (whose manager of operations, Sir Arnold Wilson, had been one of the sponsors of the *Survey*). The British and the American CIA funded a covert operation to oust Mossadegh, who was imprisoned and then placed under house arrest until his death in 1967. The mission, dubbed 'Operation Ajax,' was planned by Donald Wilber (1907–97), a Princeton-trained architect who had accompanied Pope on several of his survey trips to Iran.²³

Despite the planning, the coup initially failed, forcing the young shah to flee briefly to Iraq and then Italy, but a second coup was successful. Once reinstated in 1953, Muhammad Reza Shah became an even more fervent nationalist than his father. Over the course of the 1960s and early 1970s, the Shah forged increasingly close ties with the United States, particularly during the oil crisis of October 1973 when OPEC threatened to curtail production. The Shah made repeated state visits to the US, meeting Presidents Kennedy in 1961, Johnson in 1967, Nixon in 1969 and 1971, and Carter in 1977. In November 1964, after a private visit to the US earlier that summer, the Shah invited Pope and Ackerman, who had by this time retired in some penury to Warren, Connecticut, to make a state visit to Iran in order to resuscitate the Asia Institute as a research institution affiliated with Pahlavi University in Shiraz. The Shah's nephew, Prince Shahram, deeded over Narenjestan, a nineteenth-century residence in Shiraz, for its home (fig. 15.1).

Pope's reviving fortunes in Iran coincide with the publication of the second edition of the *Survey* in 1964–5.²⁴ Published two and a half decades after the original edition, it was produced under the auspices of the Asia Institute in Shiraz and published in Japan under the editorship of Jay Gluck, Pope's former student and assistant at the Asia Institute in New York.²⁵ The second edition

23 Wilber's memoirs (1986) make amusing reading.

24 Various libraries listed in WorldCat give 1964, 1965 or 1964–5.

25 Gluck describes the difficult process of republication in *Surveyors*, 438–43.

comprised twelve volumes, each measuring 31 cm (12 in), thus some 8 cm (3 in) smaller than the folio size of the original edition, a reduction achieved mainly by trimming the lavish margins that had graced the deluxe set. In the second edition, the original three volumes of text were basically divided into half to make six volumes. The plates were similarly split in half, but in order to get approximately the same number of plates per volume (250), they were combined in a different order but with the old numbering system. Volume twelve, for example, contains plates 511–54 and 812–980, illustrating architectural ornament and the art of the book. The original correspondence between volumes with text and volumes with plates no longer worked.

Hussein ‘Ala’—one of the patrons of the original edition of the *Survey*, subsequently Ambassador to the United States, and then Prime Minister of Iran (1951 and 1955–7)—had encouraged Gluck to publish the second edition, suggesting that it would be a suitable memento for the Shah’s upcoming coronation. This event took place on October 26, 1967 and was part of the Shah’s continuing quest for national identity, with himself in the starring role. He had himself crowned King of Kings (*shahanshah*), Light of the Aryans (*aryamihr*), and Chief Warriors (*buzurg arishtaran*); his wife Farah Diba was Empress (*shahbanu*). The titles alone show his search to forge a view of national identity that reached back to the foundation of the Persian empire under the Achaemenids.

The Shah’s dress, especially his headgear, illustrates the same theme. He was invested wearing the crown that his father Reza Shah had ordered in 1925 to replace the Qajar’s Kiyani crown.²⁶ Modeled on that of Achaemenid and Sasanian rulers, the Pahlavi crown (fig. 14.2) comprises a red velvet cap with four crenellated brows outlined in platinum set with pearls, topped by a jeweled aigrette. The front bears a diamond sunburst set with a yellow diamond of almost sixty carats. The whole confection weighs 2.8 kg, more than six pounds.

As most ancient queens of Iran had worn crowns, Muhammad Reza Shah commissioned a new one for his wife’s coronation (fig. 14.3).²⁷ Produced by Pierre Arpels in Paris, it was made of a contrasting green velvet decorated with unmounted stones from the royal treasury, including four large emeralds; three dome-shaped spinels; 105 large, mostly pear shaped pearls; and almost 1500 diamonds. Such a conscious allusion to the rituals and art of the past in order

26 Meen and Tushingham 1968, 58, and 81; Yahya Doka’, ‘Crown v. in the Qajar and Pahlavi periods’, in *ELr*, and pl. xxxiii.

27 Meen and Tushingham 1968, 57; Yahya Doka’, ‘Crown v. in the Qajar and Pahlavi periods’, in *ELr*.



FIGURE 14.2

The Pahlavi crown worn by Muhammad Reza Shah for his coronation at Persepolis on October 26, 1967 and now part of the Crown Jewels of Iran

(AFTER MEEN AND TUSHINGHAM 2535, 59).



FIGURE 14.3 *The Shahbanu crown worn by the Empress Farah for her coronation at Persepolis on October 26, 1967 and now part of the Crown Jewels of Iran*
(AFTER MEEN AND TUSHINGHAM 2535, 65).

to justify the present was nothing new in Iranian tradition: the first Sasanian kings Ardashir I (r. 224–39) and his son Shapur I (r. 239–70) had similarly revived the Achaemenid past to assert their role as the rightful heirs to a long line of kings and heroes, reviving old titles and headgear and transforming sites like Naqsh-e Rostam into “places of memory.”²⁸

Muhammad Reza Shah’s coronation in 1967 also provided the occasion to reissue the second edition of the *Survey* with three supplementary volumes containing the proceedings of the IVth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, a conference that—somewhat like a three-ring circus—had been held in New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC, from April 24 to May 3, 1960.²⁹ The Shah’s new position was vaunted in the publication: the dedication page notes that the original edition had been dedicated to his imperial majesty Reza Shah Pahlavi, Shahanshah of Iran, and the reissue was dedicated to his imperial majesty, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shahanshah of Iran.

Volume 13 of the reissue of the second edition of the *Survey*, actually published in 1968 and labeled Addendum A with separate page numbers A/1–A/65, contains various papers on the *Andarznama*, an illustrated manuscript dated Jumada I 483/July 1090 that had appeared suddenly on the art market in Paris in the late fall of 1950 and whose 109 miniatures were purported to be the earliest known to exist. The dealer Hagop Kevorkian owned half the manuscript, and the Cincinnati Museum of Art acquired the other half, some of whose paintings were exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1955.³⁰ Not all scholars accepted the manuscript’s authenticity, and these conference papers—with devastating criticism of both the text and the paintings’ iconography, style, and notably pigments that include the use of Prussian blue (an artificial pigment discovered only in 1704)—showed that the manuscript was indisputably modern. Pope, who had helped the Cincinnati Museum acquire its section,³¹ contributed a rather self-serving essay to the volume, arguing that many objects once thought to be forgeries were in fact authentic.³²

The other two volumes added to the reissue of the second edition of the *Survey*, both published in 1967, contain papers on other subjects from the 1960 conference. Volume 14, with text pages 2879–3205 and plates 1483–530, includes articles on various aspects of both pre-Islamic and Islamic art. Volume 15, with text pages 3207–310, deals with Persia and the Far East. Both were numbered in

28 Canepa 2010.

29 See the discussion of frayed nerves and snapping tempers in *Surveyors*, 420–6. Several of the speakers ended up suing each other.

30 Dimand 1955.

31 *Surveyors*, 413.

32 Pope 1968.

sequence with the earlier edition. The papers from the 1960 conference added to the reissue of the second edition of the *Survey* thus confirm the continued interest in Persian art in the post-war period, especially in America.

The Third Edition of A Survey of Persian Art

The interest in Persian art peaked in the 1960s and 1970s, a heyday promoted enthusiastically by the Iranian government. The country was now open to foreigners, resulting in such a spurt of excavation that one scholar dubbed it “the Explosive Phase” in Iranian archaeology.³³ A sample of three major excavations that took place in these decades shows how Iranian art, including archaeology, continued to be closely intertwined with politics and economics and provided the setting for the publication of the third edition of the *Survey* in 1977.

One of the most important sites to be investigated was Pasargadae (fig. 14.4), capital of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty.³⁴ Located 40 km north of Persepolis, it was excavated from 1961 to 1963 by the British Institute of Persian Studies under the capable directorship of David Stronach.³⁵ A spacious walled park irrigated by water channels dotted with separate buildings, the site contained the remains of several palaces. The major building to the south of the walled palace area was the tomb of Cyrus, a gabled limestone box set on a six-stepped pyramidal base (fig. 14.5). Ernst Herzfeld (1879–1948) had already excavated at the site in 1928,³⁶ and Erich Schmidt (1897–1964) had photographed it aerially in 1935,³⁷ but further investigations of it fitted particularly well with contemporary politics. As the principal investigator noted in his first preliminary report, the investigation was intended to document the stratigraphic, topographical, and architectural details of the site, but he also “hoped that this work may make some contribution to the celebrations planned in honour of the 2,500th anniversary of the accession of Cyrus the Great, as well as providing a practical opportunity for a number of Iranian students of archaeology to learn and practice modern field techniques.”³⁸ Excavation of the site thus fit the Shah’s national ambitions (and his interest in education).

33 T. C. Young, “Archaeology”, in *EIr*; also cited in Abdi 2001, 66.

34 Summary description and bibliography in Trudy S. Kawami, “Pasargadae”, in *Grove Dictionary of Art*.

35 Stronach 1968.

36 Herzfeld 1929–30.

37 Schmidt 1940; for a recent assessment of Schmidt’s work, see Gürsan-Salzmann 2007.

38 Stronach 1963, 20.



FIGURE 14.4 *View of Pasargadae, capital of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty*
(PHOTOGRAPH © JONATHAN BLOOM AND SHEILA BLAIR).



FIGURE 14.5 *Tomb of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid dynasty, at Pasargadae*
(PHOTOGRAPH © JONATHAN BLOOM AND SHEILA BLAIR).

Pasargadae proved an appropriate site to celebrate 2,500 years of Persian monarchy, part of the grandiose celebrations (*jashn*) hosted by the Shah in October 1971 at Persepolis and nearby Pasargadae. The celebrations, designed and catered mainly in France, were estimated to have cost between 200 and 300 million dollars. The ceremony culminated with Muhammad Reza Shah standing in front of the tomb at Pasargadae and evoking Cyrus, king of kings, as the founder of the world's oldest empire.³⁹ Lest anyone possibly miss the connection between the Achaemenids and the Pahlavis, the Shah renamed his son Reza Cyrus.

The drive to connect present with imperial past continued. In 1975 Parliament voted to replace the current solar (*hijri*) calendar with an 'Imperial' (*shahan-shahi*) one, such that March 21, 1976 became the first day (Now Ruz) of the year 2535.⁴⁰ These events coincided with a third edition of the *Survey*, issued that year (2535/1977) in sixteen volumes under the auspices of the Shahbanu Farah Foundation and National Iranian Radio and Television. The new edition maintained the smaller format of the second one and again contained six volumes of text, but this time the plates were organized sequentially as in the original edition, although divided into seven volumes (rather than the six of the second edition). The fascicule on the *Andarznama* that had been volume 13 in the second edition was renumbered simply as Addenda A to volume 13. Volume 14, as in the second edition, contains the papers on pre-Islamic and Islamic art from the 14th International Congress of Persian Art held in 1960; the papers dealing with Persia and the East that had been volume 15 of the second edition, were relabeled as Fascicule 15.

The third edition of the *Survey* also included two new volumes of bibliography up to 1938, date of publication of the original edition: volume 15 on pre-Islamic material; volume 16 on Islamic art. Each volume comprises two main parts: the first (Parts I and III, respectively) are a bibliography of sources cited in the text. Started as early as 1930 and typeset in galleys in 1933 and 1935, this work had never appeared due to vicissitudes of time and war. For the new edition, this old bibliography was supplemented (Parts II and IV) with one containing sources supplementary to the text compiled from the work of Kurt Erdmann. In addition, each of the new volumes included an index of authors. These two volumes were the last works handled by the original editors, for Ackerman, in her eighties, had died in January 1977.

Volume 15 also contains an index that had appeared as a small separate volume in 1958 with the help of Theodore Besterman as well as an appendix that tries to lay out the various (and rather confusing) changes between the subsequent editions. This appendix also mentions three projected volumes with

39 Abdi 2001 cites the Shah's words and illustrates him standing in front of the tomb (fig. 4).

40 Riza Abdollahy, "Calendars. ii. in the Islamic period", in *EIr*.

new studies carried out 1960–73 in memory of Pope. These appeared in 2005 as volume 17 on pre-Islamic studies, edited by Abbas Daneshvari and Jay Gluck, and volume 18 on Islamic architecture and art, edited by Daneshvari.

The various editions of the *Survey* document the rising interest in Persian art in America and its continuing ties to the Iranian nation as envisioned by the Shah. The second edition had appeared two and a half decades after the original; the third edition appeared in half that amount of time. Lest anyone miss the point about its purpose, the copyright page of the first volume says that the third edition with bibliography and addenda was published in 1977 (2535) “to commemorate fifty years of the Pahlavi dynasty.” Gluck’s preface to the bibliography of pre-Islamic art ends with the further note that it was done “during this 50th anniversary year of the Pahlavi Dynasty, the inauguration of which virtually coincides with Arthur Upham Pope’s initiating the *Survey of Persian Art*.”⁴¹

The third edition of the *Survey* was accompanied by a companion volume on handicrafts edited by Gluck and his wife Sumi Hiramoto Gluck.⁴² Published on February 22, 1977 under the auspices the National Bank (Bank-i Melli), it too was intended to commemorate fifty years of the Pahlavi dynasty. Subtitled “A pictorial introduction to the contemporary folk arts and art crafts of modern Iran,” the volume included short posthumous essays by Pope on the significance of Persian handicrafts (pages 13–16), rustic floor coverings (273–6), and architectural decoration (384–408, written with the assistance of the editors). The opening photograph facing the title page shows an official portrait of the royal family, posed frontally like imperial portraits of the past, but decked out in garments woven of traditional handicrafts. Issued in a limited edition of 2,535 copies—a number itself consciously recalling the new calendar—of which 1,355 were in Persian and 1,180 in English, the volume was bound in hand-loomed cotton that had been “block-printed in natural colors by Meshkat in Isfahan using antique blocks in the style of a Safavid book cover.” In both format and content, the book, like the rest of the study of Persian art, was designed to connect the present monarchy with Iran’s imperial past.

This conscious tying oneself to the past glories mirrors two other major excavations carried out under the Shah. One was at the site of Takht-i Sulayman in northwest Iran (fig. 14.6), excavated by a German team from 1959 to 1978.⁴³ An oval walled city set on the top of a mountain with a spring-fed lake, it had been mentioned only briefly in the section on Sasanian architecture in the original

41 Pope and Ackerman 1977, vol. 15, xii.

42 Gluck and Gluck 1977.

43 Naumann 1977.



FIGURE 14.6 *View of the site of Takht-i Sulayman in northwest Iran*
(PHOTOGRAPH © JONATHAN BLOOM AND SHEILA BLAIR).

edition of the *Survey*.⁴⁴ Pope and his team had surveyed the site in October 1937 as part of the eighth architectural survey of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology (reaching the relatively inaccessible site courtesy of a specially equipped truck supplied by Lord Duveen, one of the *Survey*'s sponsors),⁴⁵ and the architect Donald Wilber published some of the results the following years in the *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute* and the journal *Antiquity*.⁴⁶ At the site the team had found Parthian walls, the remains of a Sasanian fire temple, and a great vaulted *ivan* dating to the end of the thirteenth century when Iran was ruled by the Ilkhanid dynasty. Pope had wanted to investigate it further, but Wilber thought that strong winds had scoured the surface, reducing the overlay to a mere 30 cm. As Wilber himself noted, he was "dead wrong," for the German excavations went on for more than a decade and were extremely fruitful.⁴⁷

44 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, 551.

45 Wilber 1937B.

46 Wilber 1937A and 1938.

47 Wilber 1986, 60.

The German excavations uncovered more of the remains of the Sasanian fire temple and identified it as the place where the Sasanian emperors had been crowned. They also showed that site was reused as a palace in Mongol times, when the throne room was decorated with extraordinary tile decoration using at least six different techniques: unglazed, partially glazed, monochrome-glazed, luster-painting, *lavjardina*, and underglaze *lavjardina*.⁴⁸ Some showed dragons and phoenixes. Others had verses drawn from different sections of the *Shahnama*, including the prelude, the story of Rustam and Suhrab, and the ode to Mahmud of Ghazna that introduces the tale of Rustam and Isfandiyar. The verses on the tiles were thus designed not to give a consecutive narrative but rather to evoke specific sections of the story and famous heroes of the poem.⁴⁹ The Mongols, it seems, were trying to curry legitimacy by tying themselves to the past, and the site thus offers a striking parallel to the Pahlavi rulers who had tried to connect themselves to Achaemenids.

A third major excavation (and restoration) that took place in these decades was that by the Italians in the Friday Mosque in Isfahan, conducted by Eugenio Galdieri between 1970 and 1978 (fig. 14.7).⁵⁰ The Italian excavators worked from the plan of the mosque painstakingly surveyed by Eric Schroeder as part of the architectural survey conducted by the American Institute in 1931 and published in the original edition of the *Survey*.⁵¹ Like the German excavations at Takht-i Sulayman, the Italian ones in the mosque at Isfahan opened up far more of the site and its history over time, allowing scholars to see the progression from the so-called Arab or hypostyle plan, typical of the 'Abbasid period, through the relining of the court façade in the tenth century under the Buyids, to the introduction of four *ivans* in the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the Seljuks to produce the classic Iranian-style of mosque with four *ivans* and a domed sanctuary.⁵² As at Pasargadae, the excavations were also intended to provide a training ground for Iranians, befitting the Shah's plan to encourage

48 The full study of the tiles is Masuya 1997; see also Tomoko Masuya, "Ilkhanid courtly life", in Komaroff and Carboni 2002, 74–103, where many tiles are illustrated in color.

49 Melikian-Chirvani (1984 and 1991) identified the verses and suggested that they were possibly rephrased in the first person (that is, "he said" changed to "I said") as if the kings and heroes from the *Shahnama* were actually speaking at the site and thus intended to link the Iranian kings with ancient rulers. Masuya (1997, 493–502) found his work unconvincing, suggesting that he had not taken into account the many variants of the text given in the latest version of the *Shahnama* by Khalegi-Motlagh (1988–) that had been unavailable to Melikian-Chirvani. More work identifying the verses needs to be done to show whether the variants were willful.

50 Galdieri 1972–84.

51 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, opposite 954.

52 Summarized in Bloom and Blair 1997, 152–7; see also Grabar 1990.



FIGURE 14.7

Excavations carried out by the Italians in the 1970s in the congregational mosque at Isfahan

(PHOTOGRAPH © JONATHAN BLOOM AND SHEILA BLAIR).

education, but they were interpreted in another way as well. Giuseppe Tucci began his forward to the first volume of the Italian excavation report, which appeared in 1972, with the comment that this volume, issued with others on Persepolis and on the travels of Pietro della Valle, was meant as a tribute to Cyrus the Great.⁵³ Current excavations, even of a mosque, were thus tied to the Achaemenid past and the Shah's vision of it as the cornerstone of his own realm.

The Afterlife of A Survey of Persian Art

The Iranian revolution of 1979 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran cut short much of the outside archaeological activity in Iran, as many foreigners were expelled and contact between Iranian scholars and Westerners, particularly Americans, was curtailed over the next decades.⁵⁴

53 Galdieri 1972, p. ix (Italian) and xi (English translation).

54 In Iran, this spurning of the West was sometimes justified as a reaction to *gharbzadegi* (lit. "plagued by the West" or 'westoxification'); see Ahmad Ashraf, "Conspiracy theories", in *Elr*. The term is so common that there is even a Wikipedia entry of 'Gharbzadegi.'

One unexpected boon of the hiatus was the opportunity for archaeologists to write up their excavation reports. Thus the third volume of the Italian excavations at the Friday Mosque in Isfahan appeared in 1984.⁵⁵ It opens with a brief introduction by Oleg Grabar, a precursor to the sequence of lectures he gave on the mosque published in 1990 as part of the Hagop Kevorkian series on Near Eastern art and civilization.⁵⁶ Galdieri's text contains an overview of the research and restoration from 1970 to 1978, with new observations up to 1982. It remains the best architectural survey of the mosque to date and provided the basis for Grabar's broader cultural perspective. Galdieri's volume is dedicated to Myron Bement Smith (1897–1970), the American architect and art historian who had been appointed secretary of Pope's newly created Institute in New York in April 1930 and who had carried out a meticulous documentation of Islamic buildings in the Isfahan region in the 1930s.⁵⁷

In general, however, the decades following the Iranian Revolution have not been kind to the study of Persian art. Most scholars in Iran do not know what is published outside the country, particularly in America, and in turn most outsiders do not know all of what is published in Iran.⁵⁸ In the interval there have been two surveys on Iranian art and architecture, and both bear the impact of Pope's original *Survey*. The first is the handsome *The Arts of Persia*, edited by Ronald W. Ferrier (1929–2003).⁵⁹ Having taught at the University of Shiraz from 1962 to 1965, he completed his dissertation at the University of Cambridge in 1970 on British-Persian relations in the seventeenth century and published a book on the portrait of Iran drawn by the French jeweler and traveler Jean Chardin (1643–1713). As a historian at the British Petroleum Company, he also wrote several histories of it and of Iran in the twentieth century. While there, he was also approached by the art promoter Hossein Amirsadeghi to put together a survey of Persian art.

The *Arts of Persia* opens with Ferrier's brief historical introduction, followed by nineteen chapters organized much like the *Survey*. The first three chapters treat pre-Islamic material, as in the first volume of the *Survey*. The rest of the book covers the Islamic period as a whole, divided as in the *Survey* by media, beginning with architecture and then moving to the other arts, albeit in a dif-

55 Galdieri 1972–84.

56 Grabar 1990.

57 Smith's archives are now at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC; see <http://sirir-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?uri=full=3100001~!283688!0> (accessed April 16, 2015).

58 The Book of the Year Prize of the Islamic Republic of Iran, founded in 1983 by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and renamed the 'World Prize for the Book of the Year of the Islamic Republic of Iran,' is intended to bridge this gap by bringing foreign scholars and their books to Iran.

59 Ferrier 1989. Obituary by C. Edmond Bosworth in *Iran*, 41 (2003), v–vi.

ferent order.⁶⁰ Music and ornament are no longer included, but the *Arts of Persia* did add a new chapter on vernacular architecture, a term that had been applied to buildings since 1857 but that had come into vogue only after the formation of the Vernacular Architecture Group in England in 1984.⁶¹ The volume's popularity in Iran is clear, for it was soon translated into Persian.⁶²

The other survey of Iranian art and architecture published after the Iranian revolution was even more splendid: a three-volume work entitled the *Splendour of Iran*, proposed by the British publisher Edward Booth-Clibborn in 1995 and published in 2001 under the general editorship of Nasrallah Pourjavady, the director of Iran University Press.⁶³ Its three volumes also follow much the same organization as the six-volume *Survey*, with one volume on the pre-Islamic period (actually entitled "Ancient Times") and two on the Islamic period, divided, as in the *Survey*, between architecture and the other arts. It too was the work of a large group of scholars (in this case sixty-three as opposed to the seventy-two of the original *Survey*), but in this case the editors did not write any of the text. As opposed to the *Survey*, Iranians themselves wrote many of the articles. Most are quite short (3–4 pages of text), but they are supplemented with many high-quality illustrations that are included within or next to the text, and virtually all of them in resplendent color.

In terms of content, the *Splendour of Iran* contains further updates as well. As a nod to the modern situation of the Islamic Republic (and to increased interest in anthropology), the publication includes chapters on religious and ritual paraphernalia and settings. Vernacular architecture was also expanded and subdivided. It includes not simply the bridges, fortifications, and caravanserais covered in Pope's chapter in the original *Survey*,⁶⁴ but separate articles on caravanserais, *qanats* (subterranean aqueducts), cisterns, bridges and dams, pigeon towers, and the citadel (Arg) at Bam.

Looking backward, it is difficult to overestimate the impact of the *Survey* some seventy-five years after its original publication. Its organization set the model for other surveys. Although the text itself has often been superseded by more recent research and perspectives, its illustrations are still regularly used and cited in other reference works such as the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Walter

60 In the original *Survey*, volume II contained sections on architecture, ceramics, and calligraphy and epigraphy; volume III sections on painting and art of the book, textiles, carpets, metalwork, minor arts, ornament, and music. In *The Arts of Iran*, architecture was followed by carpets, textiles, metalwork, jewelry, coins, painting, post-Safavid painting, arts of the book, lacquer, ceramics, tiles, glass and calligraphy.

61 N. W. Alcock, "Vernacular architecture 1. introduction", in *Grove Dictionary of Art*.

62 Ferrier 1995.

63 Booth-Clibborn and Pourjavady 2001.

64 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, chapter 40, 1226–51.

Denny's article there on "Carpets," for example, cites the *Survey* in the bibliography, noting that it is "now largely out of date but still the best single source for images of early Persian carpets."⁶⁵ Pope himself had been prescient in recognizing the value of photography, and it is to his credit that the *Survey* was so generously illustrated, especially with large plates.

The *Survey's* illustrations too have generated their own afterlife. One of few carpets illustrated in color in the *Survey* was the Polonaise rug owned by Mrs. Rainey Rogers.⁶⁶ Exhibited at the great Burlington House Exhibition in London in 1931 (no. 279), it had graced her mansion at 58 Park Avenue. In his chapter on carpets in the *Survey*, Pope lauded it, saying "Nothing further in the way of refinement, imagination, perfection of technique, or infinite charm of colour was produced in this period. . . . No more exquisite harmony was ever realized in any Persian rug."⁶⁷

The rug's prominent pedigree and publication enhanced its reputation. After Rogers's death, it passed through the hands of the dealer Hagop Kevorkian. In 1943 he sold it to the tobacco heiress Doris Duke (1912–1993), who installed it in Rough Point, her summer home in Newport, Rhode Island. After Duke's death, the rug was sold at auction at Christie's in New York on June 3, 2008 for \$4,450,500 (including premiums)—triple its estimate and the highest price yet paid at auction for a carpet—to the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar (fig. 14.8).⁶⁸ Pope had long admired Persian carpets; in fact, he traced his interest in Persian art to his early childhood when he came into contact with the Persian rugs in the house of his maiden aunts in Boston.⁶⁹

In many ways the Rogers-Duke carpet exemplifies the coverage of art in the *Survey*: the interest in masterpieces, especially collectible ones; the large and often high-quality illustrations; and the enthusiastic, if at times uncritical, prose. Pope was passionate about Iran and the art there. He may have been wrong in missing some of the individual trees, but he saw the forest. And his passion made the *Survey* not only a weighty publication but also a long-lasting and influential one.

65 Walter D. Denny, "Carpets," in *EI*/3.

66 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, pl. 1261.

67 Pope and Ackerman 1938–9, 2397.

68 Christie's, June 3, 2008, Lot 37, sale 2006: http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=5077302 (accessed April 16, 2015); on the Qatari acquisition of Safavid carpets, see Franes 2008; expanded version on-line at <http://www.hali.com/Assets/Files/Qatar%2036dpi.Pdf> (accessed April 16, 2015).

69 See his obituary in the *New York Times* on September 4, 1969, and Bloom's article in this volume.



FIGURE 14.8 *Polonaise carpet published in A Survey of Persian Art, once owned by the heiresses Mrs. Grace Rainey Rogers and Doris Duke and now in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha (CA.80.2008)*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART, DOHA).

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FIGURE 15.1 *Narenjestan, 1952. Digital Images & Slides Collection (FryeShirazNaran.04, AKP034), Special Collections, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University*
(IMAGE COURTESY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, FINE ARTS LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY).

Arthur Upham Pope: A Personal Memoir*

Cornelia Montgomery

In 1958, I became secretary to Maurice Dimand (1892–1986), Curator of Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, my first job after graduating from Radcliffe College with a B.A. in Oriental Art.¹ One afternoon the collector Joseph McMullan (1896–1973) invited me to a tea dance at the Plaza Hotel and introduced me to Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) and his wife, Phyllis Ackerman (1893–1977). They asked me to join them at their table, and treated me as a welcome addition. I was charmed, both by them and their conversation, which had also kept me from staring at Aly Khan (1911–60) who was on the dance floor.² When they invited me to visit them in western Connecticut, I eagerly accepted.

The house in Warren was a well-proportioned old colonial with sweeping views, set close to a narrow country lane aptly named Above All Road. Typically it had many rooms, some quite small, most lined with bulging bookshelves (6,000 volumes followed them to Shiraz). Arthur was very tall and had to stoop to pass through most of the doorways. Fascinating objects from New

* Some incidents mentioned in the present article are also found in Jay Gluck and Noel Siver (eds.), *Surveyors of Persian Art: A Documentary Biography of Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman* (1996) (hereafter *Surveyors*). The editors were continuing work begun by Rex Stead and Robert Payne, honoring their decision that if Pope's life were to be properly understood, nothing could be omitted, even some very unflattering material. Since Pope's life and works are discussed in Bloom's chapter and elsewhere in the present volume, there is some minor overlapping with material which I also cover. An excellent entry on Pope was provided by Siver (Siver 2005). This is a late addition to the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* which began publishing in 1982, but the printed version of the volumes is still incomplete. In 2002, I published an entry on Ackerman (Montgomery 2002), and the Asia Institute is discussed by Frye (Frye 2003). These *Elr* entries are available only online.

- 1 The name Radcliffe was later dropped when the college was fully merged with Harvard University.
- 2 Prince Ali S. Aga Khan known as Aly Khan, was son of Aga Khan III, the head of the Isma'ili Muslims. A socialite, racehorse owner and jockey, he died in a car accident in 1960. His father had picked Aly's son Karim to succeed him as Aga Khan IV in 1957. Karim was in the class of 1958 at Harvard, same year as I. Karim was a quiet, modest man, unlike his father. Pope visited him in his residence outside Paris.

England, Europe, Persia, and China were tastefully arranged on all vacant surfaces, starring a large Tang horse which stood proudly on a windowsill.³ The atmosphere was cozy. The Library, one of the two largest rooms in the house, was to the right of the front door and contained most of their books. Half of its available floor space was occupied by a grand piano. As a young man Pope had played well enough to consider a career as a concert pianist, and he could still manage some of his favorite passages.

The move to Connecticut had been due to financial necessity but neither complained, and they had definitely made the best of it. They were captivating hosts. Phyllis was then in her seventies, Arthur in his eighties, and they insisted that I use their first names. Over the years they had encountered many prominent international figures—academics, authors, artists, political figures, presidents, and royalty—and some had remained life-long friends. Arthur in particular was a brilliant storyteller, and the two of them had acquired enough gossip to give one the impression of sitting in the front row of history. They also shared a fondness for tales of political intrigue, usually pulling for the far left of the political spectrum. A sure way to observe Arthur's famed verbal skills at close hand was to get him fired up on the respective civilizations of the Persians and the Greeks. He knew his classics, and deeply resented the term 'barbarians' used to describe the highly advanced culture to the East. There were occasional visits from their friends, and the relaxed but stimulating conversations provided me with a model of honest intellectual discussion. Their beloved long-haired cats wandered in and out but Arthur never let them interrupt his flow. He was more likely just to encourage the animal onto his lap while still talking, where he could continue the conversation without interruption. Phyllis was the one who tended to let herself be distracted mid-conversation.

Arthur had always depended heavily upon Phyllis, without whose help many of the endeavors for which he is remembered would have been impossible. Arthur had an M.A. and had taught aesthetics at Berkeley, but Phyllis earned a doctorate in philosophy, so he was Professor Pope and she was Dr. Ackerman. It always amused Phyllis to declare that no one knew whether they were legally married; in any case she had refused to change her name. "Mrs. Pope" was never an option.⁴

3 This magnificent work of art accompanied them to Iran but following their deaths it was one of the items stolen from a storage room at the Institute.

4 *Surveyors*, 67–68. Their relationship, involving Arthur's divorce from his first wife, eventually caused Arthur to resign his position at Berkeley.

The following incident will demonstrate her strength of character: having contracted a rare and virulent form of polio in Cairo, she had been flown to Paris where Arthur put her in a hospital to continue her recuperation. In an embittered tone, she once told me how he had left her there for several weeks, “blind and dying,” to attend to pressing duties involving an exhibition among other projects, as so many other people were counting on him.⁵ Her eyesight returned but Phyllis had been told that she would never walk again. Not willing to accept ‘never,’ she waited for the staff to take their afternoon break and began her efforts to prove them wrong, until she was detected by one of the nurses who promptly fainted. Her doctor was summoned. He sat in one of the chairs and said “Madame, I am told that you walk, please demonstrate.” She did. He spluttered “Il n’est pas possible!” marched out and that was the last she ever saw of him.

In New York I would learn more about them. My former boss Dimand had nothing good to say, quite the contrary.⁶ Pope had a larger-than-life personality, which worked well in many circumstances but was a cause for resentment in other camps. The author Robert Payne, whom I had met in Warren, wrote: “. . . he was accustomed to being attacked and was aware that he was a controversial character. I never heard him speak angrily about anyone, even about his most venomous detractors.”⁷ Phyllis, however, was less charitable. Pope had been a mover and a shaker who preferred to play by his own rules. A comparison to P. T. Barnum (1810–91) is not too wide of the mark.⁸ He organized events on a grand, even spectacular scale, often involved with several simultaneously, like the Master of at least a three-ring circus.

After 1961 I was researching Oriental and Islamic collections for the catalogue of the Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and by 1966 had an M.A. in Islamic Art from the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, studying under Richard Ettinghausen (1906–79). When Pope asked me to join them in Shiraz later that year, I accepted, intending to return to the Metropolitan after experiencing the Near East firsthand. It would be a unique opportunity and was too tempting to resist. So I left in October, against the advice, not to say dire warnings, of Ettinghausen and Charles Wilkinson (1898–1986), Curator of the Ancient Near Eastern Department, both of whom

5 “So many other people were counting on him . . .” was used frequently as an excuse. I can hear Pope saying it even now.

6 *Surveyors*, 203–7. See also Bloom’s chapter, note 41.

7 *Surveyors*, 375.

8 *Surveyors*, 170, letter from Stuart Cary Welch (1928–2008), early October 1980.

knew him well.⁹ Like others who remembered him in his more active years, they were familiar with some of his less admirable tendencies. Their concern for my welfare centered on his habitual juggling of financial obligations, which had often meant delayed payment for teaching staff at his Asia Institute in New York, but also his way of using up the goodwill of those around him. Regarding my salary, their worries proved to be groundless but on the second issue, it was fair warning.

Before he left for Iran in the early 60s, I was privileged to witness Pope at his best. He had been asked to speak about a sixteenth-century Persian rug at a gallery on the Upper East Side.¹⁰ It was the first time I had seen him hold forth before an audience. The event was held in a large room, with the carpet spread on the floor and about thirty chairs placed around it. He always had a gift for spontaneous eloquence, and on this occasion he summoned his skills effortlessly, discussing details of the design in terms which were not beyond the grasp of his listeners yet opened their eyes so they could better understand what they were seeing. He carried the audience along with him, using his personal experience of the carpet, so that they, too, felt more intimate with it. We could sense his sincere admiration for the object before us, and in sharing his thoughts on this elegant vision of Safavid carpet weaving he raised our levels of appreciation not only for the carpet but for the civilization that had produced it. The experience was quite thrilling. Pope was fatigued but he had put on quite a show.

He had recently been informed that the retina of the eye holds color memory as it moves across adjacent colors, and he was convinced that the justly revered Persian dyers somehow understood this phenomenon. New information never failed to excite him and he shared his latest 'discoveries' with great enthusiasm.

One could credit his articulate spontaneity to his experience as a university professor and it is my belief that he spoke with greater fluency and immediacy than comes across in his writings, over which he labored in his final years. He has in fact been accused of unnecessary verbosity. But in any case, I have never heard any speaker who was his match on a similar occasion. Those were the days when an elderly professor of aesthetics could wax poetic, but

9 Charles Wilkinson and his wife were on friendly terms with Arthur and Phyllis. Ettinghausen had become quite critical although he was more gracious after Pope's death.

10 This sixteenth-century Persian rug, known as the Seley Carpet, is now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1978.550; Presented in memory of Richard Ettinghausen, Gift of Louis E., Theresa S., Hervey, and Elliot Jay Seley, and Purchase, Harris Brisbane Dick and Fletcher Funds, 1978).

the approach to carpet study since his prime has evolved into a less rhapsodic discipline.

The Shah genuinely admired Pope, and it was through his personal intervention that the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University came into being. He also arranged for the beautiful nineteenth-century Narenjestan Palace (fig. 15.1) to be deeded to the Asia Institute by his extremely handsome nephew Shahram.

The residence in Shiraz was in stark contrast to the New England colonial. It had been leased from a distinguished Shirazi family and was situated on one side of a very large walled-in garden with several tall thick trees, and many smaller ones planted in sunken squares to maintain water during strictly-controlled irrigation. Near the residence there was also an oval pool of reasonable depth. The building itself was of impressive size with two entrances flanking a colonnaded veranda, bedrooms to the left, dining and kitchen areas to the right. The high-ceilinged drawing room or salon was very grand, its white walls with depressed niches soon filled with books and objets d'art, and its tall windows giving onto the veranda. The floor was covered with their carpets. Rahim was the cook, although he deserves a more exalted title. He seemed to understand exactly what was needed in every circumstance, and was very quick in finding solutions to any problems that arose. He also tended to Arthur and Phyllis when they were ill. In his way he orchestrated this pair of aging academics, and together they established a harmonious co-existence.

Pope had always spent many hours stretched out on the sofa when they lived in Connecticut. There was no comparable lengthy piece of furniture in the salon in Shiraz, so he would take to his bed in the afternoon, leaving connecting doors open. Although he was at the opposite end of the house from the kitchen, occasionally this elderly gentleman would bellow "Rahim, reheat my Ovaltine!"¹¹

At some point the absence of classical music began to distress him and on a visit to Tehran, he conducted a search for the ideal record player, deciding on a Grundig. Once it arrived in Shiraz, he waited impatiently for the installation to be complete, then put on a recording of a Beethoven piano concerto and sat in his favorite armchair to listen. Tears began to fall. The name of the artist escapes me but it was not Rubenstein, whom he disliked. Pope made a few attempts to get his own piano sent over but to no avail.

11 Because of his age, health and status, Arthur had obtained Commissary privileges from the American Embassy arguing that his health depended upon including some familiar fare into his diet. Ovaltine was one of the items which came from the US by ship to the Gulf, then moved by plane to Tehran and finally ended up in Shiraz with the Chartrands who ran the Iran-America Society. When they called, we jumped because the steaks would still be frozen.

Phyllis had some difficulties adjusting to life in Shiraz. She missed her elegant cats terribly though replacements were found soon after her arrival. They were just cats, although she fussed over them. She also missed her beloved gardens, and arranged for some flowers to be planted around the pool. This brilliant woman was suffering from signs of mental instability with bouts of depression and silent anger. In Connecticut she had been deeply involved in research on Mother Goddesses which later feminists would have appreciated. In Shiraz she became intrigued by the void patterns in textiles and interpreted some of them as phallic symbols. This eventually earned her the sobriquet 'Phallus Ackerman.'

The office staff consisted of a manager and editor, Jay Gluck, also an Iranian woman, the French wife of an Iranian surgeon, and me. Employed as assistants, we were really glorified secretaries and he kept us very busy. I later learned that he had always kept his secretarial staff hopping, but in Warren, with no staff, he had been forced to write his often lengthy letters by hand. One day I finally summoned the courage to remind him that my invitation to join the Asia Institute had mentioned such activities as cataloguing their library, and his famous photographs, with chances for some travel and research of my own. He replied that he would rather not have to dictate so many letters, but we were all engaged in a pioneer project and therefore must all put our shoulders to the grindstone. Thus, in one sentence, he effectively curtailed any further revolutionary action on my part. Phyllis once complained about having to put aside her own projects to help Arthur with his and it still angered her. If he could get Phyllis to do something against her will it shows just how persuasive the man could be.

Pope had survived several health problems which he had been told would cut short his life at around the age of thirty, and had had episodes of serious illness all his life. He self-dosed his medications, and next to him on the dining room table was a large plate covered with small bottles of pills. He would select one or two according to his state of health that day, since after so many years of experience he knew precisely which ones were indicated. Guests were often amazed at the size of his portable pharmacy but were usually too polite to comment. At some point during the meal he would confide that his friends had always teased him about his medications, and then came the punch line: "However, I regret to inform you, they are all dead."

He had a wonderful sense of humor. And he could also take on the role of Miss Lonelyhearts, dispensing excellent advice, and then resume dictation.

Both Pope and Ackerman had unusually strong personalities, which meant being on one's toes at all times. It could be exhausting. I had a room on the top floor of the house, and my presence was expected in the salon each evening.

Eventually I found a delightful bungalow to occupy while its official renter, a grandnephew of the poet Wordsworth, was on leave. It had been built by the English when they were setting up telegraph lines to India, and had thick walls and small windows, wisely following traditions best suited to the climate. At last there was the freedom to enjoy other members of the foreign community which included some remarkable individuals, a few remaining life-long friends. I was finally able to travel and went via bus to Isfahan, Yazd, Kerman, Mahan, Bam, down to the Gulf, returning via Iran Air on a WWII airplane flown by an Australian pilot. I traveled solo, an altogether hare-brained adventure with its difficult and awkward moments and just plain good luck, but that trip remains a favorite memory of my Passage to Persia.

Pope's salon was usually a stop for important visitors to the area. He would hold court and put on an engaging performance, but was also sincerely interested in his guests. These included small groups from museums, important collectors of Persian art, and scholars, but I particularly remember Yehudi Menuhin (1916–99), with whom Pope had a lengthy discussion about aesthetics. My admiration was drawn more to his musical talent, as I am an amateur violinist.

The focus of our attention became the Vth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, originally supposed to occur in 1964, finally held in 1968 in Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz. Letters were frequently addressed to well-known academics, giving the dates for the meetings. Pope's schedule never coincided with that of the organizers in Tehran and three times they advanced his dates by several months. The money had already been set aside by the government and various oil companies for the purpose of the Congress, but it occurred to his staff that those holding the purse strings were waiting for Pope's demise so that they would be free of his interference. They may have feared he would be too lavish, as was his habit in the past. Meanwhile he was clearly hoping that pressure from several well-known academics would help push matters to a conclusion. This is where I saw him put into practice his oft-repeated phrase: "One must possess great patience in dealing with the Iranians."

Another visit of the 'money men' would be announced, informing him of yet another 'necessary' delay. He had always tended to disregard those whose interest in life went no further than the bottom line, and this situation was becoming a challenge because he had no power to act on his own. He could only resume his indirect pressure by writing more letters to prominent scholars.

The Empress Farah Pahlavi was Patroness of the Institute. She visited twice while I was there. Arthur welcomed her in the *ivan* of the Narenjestan to show her the process of the renovations of the former Qajar palace, which she had funded. Chairs, sofas, and a table had been hastily provided to make the enor-

mous space look furnished. It glittered with bits of colored glass and mirrors from the Qajar period. Pope applied some gentle pressure, hoping to solicit her aid in getting the powers that be in Tehran to cease their obstructive tactics. His frustration was beginning to appear through the cracks.

During these months, Pope was considering potential speakers. We were working under the direction of Ezat Negahban (1926–2009) in Tehran, but were able to make suggestions for the talks and help organize the sessions.

A request to attend had been submitted by an American who was not a scholar, but Pope put in a good word, and the fellow was invited. He went on to make a name for himself in rug studies. A few years later he wrote in an American review devoted to carpet studies that he had been astonished to learn that Pope was still alive when he arrived in Iran, and still deeply regretted that he had not seized the opportunity to confront him with his error in the attribution of the so-called “Vase” carpets. Pope was not only alive and well, he was personally responsible for the fellow coming to Iran. Furthermore, it should be considered unprofessional to score points about publications of early efforts to assemble and identify a large body of material. The Survey was published in 1938–9.¹²

The Congress came off eventually in April 1968 and was quite successful. There was a grand reception at which the Shah addressed the assembled scholars, with Pope and Ackerman front and center. The Shah had much more charisma than the official portraits suggest. He moved along the row of participants, who were organized by their countries of origin, addressing each of them as they were introduced.

Pope was president of the Congress, and he refused to comply with a request from the Iranian intelligence service that he submit the text of his Opening Address in advance. He intended to speak without notes. As a result he was informed that a taping device was being set up directly in front of the stage in order to record his remarks. Pope blew his stack (there is no other way to put it) with phrases such as “this is an insult to my relationship with the Shah” pouring forth. The equipment disappeared. The author and historian Terence O'Donnell (1924–2001) recounted the following incident which he witnessed:

The Shah, seeing no chair for Pope to sit on, leaned over to the next box and spoke to one of his relatives, the man responsible for the intelligence service, and asked him to provide a chair for Professor Pope. The chair

12 SPA.

appeared, but Arthur, frail and slightly unsteady though he was, refused to seat himself in the presence of the Shah and the Empress.¹³

During an open meeting in the Shiraz portion of the Congress, several speakers had decided that it was necessary to add to the Constitution a condemnation of the practice of removing artifacts, especially those resulting from excavations, from their country of origin. Eventually there was a vote, with more than a few curators from Western museums feeling obliged to vote with the majority, and some abstentions. Only four attendees voted 'nay.' In the front row, the arms of Roman Ghirshman (1895–1979) and Arthur Upham Pope literally shot up. Pope had made his argument stressing that objects such as the Luristan bronzes had brought the attention of the world to early Iranian cultures. They had been ambassadors, and we would not be having this congress had they not travelled to foreign lands. Besides, he continued, admirable though it may be to wish to protect excavation sites and fragments of buildings from illegal dealing in the marketplace, the constitution of the present organization was not the place to introduce a formal amendment of this sort. Despite his plea, the amendment was adopted and was considered by those who sponsored it as an important first step in helping nations protect their antiquities.¹⁴

Throughout his lifetime Pope had a constant need for acquiring funds; this was undoubtedly his Achilles heel. In a sort of Faustian bargain, money enabled him to realize extraordinary achievements but it also cast a shadow on his reputation. It is agreed by those in a position to know best, that he did not keep the funds for himself but rather spent them on projects involving the original Asia Institute.

That he was not buying fancy cars with any ill-gotten gains, I can personally attest. He took me on a hair-raising trip from western Connecticut to New York City in a vehicle just this side of a rattle-trap, the broken window on the driver's side stuck fully open. With what seemed like a combination of youthful disobedience and pure delight in speed, the octogenarian flew down the narrow, often curving, roads disregarding all posted limits, veering away from oncoming traffic, all the while entertaining his passenger with fascinating tales of adventure. In my mid-twenties, I was a quivering wreck.

In Shiraz he would be provided with a spanking new white Chevrolet and a chauffeur. Now for the first time he had true patrons in the royal family, and he and Phyllis were quite comfortable, their health overseen by competent doc-

13 Personal communication with Terence O'Donnell in the 1970s.

14 *Surveyors*, 533–41.

tors. Ironically he had almost no control over the manner in which funds were spent, which must have caused him some occasional frustration.

The couple has come under severe criticism because, after more recent scientific examination, a number of 'early' textiles acquired from Pope and now in various museums, have proved to be forgeries. Flying back from Tehran in 2004, the gentleman seated next to me let it be known that he was involved in the buying and selling of important antiquities from excavations. After my little speech about the tragic loss of locale, hence identity, we spoke of Pope. He knew a great deal about him, and was convinced that one of the well-known dealers in Tehran had provided him with the textiles, using him as a conduit to the collections in the US.¹⁵ Whether Pope and especially Ackerman, the textile expert, were aware that these fragments were not authentic is a subject on which I do not feel qualified to comment. She used to be furious when one of her pieces would be removed by Arthur without her consent and sold. Surely she would not knowingly cling to a fake, and probably some fragments were genuine.

In New York, the *Andarznama* proved to be a forgery, after microscopic study had revealed the use of a pigment introduced in modern times, thus rendering an early date impossible—Pope was terribly disappointed.¹⁶ Once in Tehran he had taken me along when visiting one of his favorite dealers from the old days. They showed him a bowl, supposedly the eleventh century, with a very shiny glaze and rather odd design. Having just catalogued several hundred sherds from Nishapur at the Met, I thought it was unconvincing, but Arthur rather admired it. He did not buy it but the incident left me feeling uneasy about his 'eye' for the minor arts.

A nicer story from Tehran was told me recently by Samuel Peterson, a friend and fellow student of Richard Ettinghausen, who had an exhibition of photos at the Iran-America Society in Tehran in the 60s. Pope visited the show and wrote a note addressed to the photographer, whom he did not know. He wanted absolute assurance that it would reach Sam. The note was eloquent, and ended by saying that [Pope] had never seen such beautiful photographs

15 In 2004 I was traveling with Louise Mackie of the Cleveland Museum and Nobuko Kajitani, formerly head of Textile Conservation at the Metropolitan and who discovered that curators in Iran were not immune from displaying forgeries, although they were certain only the American museums had been duped. During the years when these appeared on the market, no one would have had the equipment to deny their authenticity. They were very convincing and included lines of poetry, altogether very sophisticated examples of weaving.

16 *Surveyors*, 423–5.

of Iran. Sam, later a Ph.D. and professor, told me that he had never forgotten the gesture. He said that Pope always expressed genuine enthusiasm for young people who showed interest in a subject and encouraged them whenever he had the occasion, often sharing his own experiences. His attitude was "Yes! Go and do it!"

If Arthur Upham Pope is remembered for nothing else, his photographic repertory of Iranian architecture would be a remarkable testament.¹⁷ When he first ventured there in the 1920s, the territory was unfamiliar, roads nearly inexistent, with occasional sandstorms ("... it was coming through the keyhole of the car door!"). Deciding which of the monuments to record for further study required teamwork and he was helped by able assistants. It was altogether a very strenuous undertaking.

The team was threatened by mullahs who disliked flash bulbs, and were not accustomed to allowing Westerners access to their religious buildings. Pope still delighted in recounting his adventures in the early days when his plea for access to the religious buildings had resulted in the imams being obliged to accede upon orders from the Shah. But this break with tradition was not fully accepted in every quarter. On one occasion, he and an assistant were being pursued by an angered crowd inside a mosque when they were rescued by members of the militia sent by the Shah, who, unbeknownst to Pope, had been "hiding behind the columns in the event that things got out of control." Another time, he was worried that a drink offered him by an imam would result in illness, but he drank it anyway rather than risk refusing a well-intentioned gesture. As he had feared, he came down with typhus, which he felt had nearly cost him his life. However, he felt it was all worth it, and remained justly proud of his part in opening up these buildings so that the entire world could appreciate their magnificence. These were touchy times, and the Shah's guarantee of safety went only so far.

A complete photography novice when he set out, Pope eventually discovered tricks with one of his cameras that the German manufacturer later declared it had not been designed for. He once told me that he learned to set the focus with a magnifying glass to obtain absolute clarity of detail. The negatives had to have been of superb quality to allow for the impressive enlargements which were exhibited in Europe and America. Most of them appear in *A Survey of Persian Art*.¹⁸

17 See O'Kane's chapter on architecture in this volume.

18 For the exhibitions of architectural photography, see *Surveyors*, 273–83. Some of his photographs are now in the collection of the Fine Arts Library, Harvard University, and are available online (<http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/finearts/>, accessed June 10, 2015).

Decades later, living in Shiraz, he could instantly identify any photo in his files, and he often enjoyed recounting tales of his adventures in getting the shot. But the Congress occupied him increasingly, and I ceased springing images on him which I had hoped to identify for posterity.

In Shiraz he was making corrections for what he hoped would be a second edition to his book on Persian architecture. The volume had been published in 1965 but Pope was very upset that Braziller published it before he had finished correcting the galleys.¹⁹ It is not impossible that he had overextended a deadline or two and they went to press in desperation. At any rate he was convinced that they had done so without his consent. He continued to work on the galley proofs almost daily with painstaking thoroughness, as he must have known it would be his final chance to do justice to his most cherished subject matter. However, there was never a second edition.

In recent years Pope had been consulting with the eighth-generation chief mason from the Friday Mosque in Isfahan about weight-bearing bricks in the ribs of the arches in the original Seljuk sections of the mosque. During recent work in those areas, the mason had discovered that indeed the ribbing was several layers deep. In 1934–5 he had quite courageously lectured to French universities on “Persian Contributions to the Beginnings of Gothic Architecture,” and was now convinced that he had irrefutable proof of his theory.²⁰ He was positively gleeful, and was preparing to revise his above-mentioned lecture on Persian contributions but this time with solid evidence.

The last time I saw Pope and Ackerman, not long after the Congress ended, my replacement had already arrived, and we were assembled for a final lunch. Arthur had for weeks been promising me a farewell gift, a choice of one of their ceramic pieces, and often inquired as to the present choice. This had become our little game. That morning he had informed me that the entire collection had been put in Phyllis’s name and would later belong to the Iranian government, and therefore he was not at liberty to dispose of any of it. I was not really surprised. Lunch was awkward and I took my leave, saying goodbye to Arthur who was already taking his daily stroll on the veranda. He wished me well, only briefly breaking stride. It was on the whole a rather an anti-climactic send-off.

The negative aspects of my experience with Pope and Ackerman in Shiraz, immature and naive as I no doubt was, proved difficult to shed. It is almost impossible to spend every day in the presence of someone of great reputa-

19 Pope 1965.

20 His address had previously been delivered to the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in February 1933. Pope’s Persian-Gothic thesis was favorably reviewed by Martin S. Briggs (1882–1977) in the *Burlington Magazine*, 62/361 (April 1933), 183–9.

tion without observing some of the less admirable characteristics. He was now elderly, his greatest accomplishments lay in the past, and to borrow an image from his beloved classical world, it was as though the theatrical mechanics needed to maneuver the *deus ex machina* were beginning to creak and the manipulating movements previously hidden from view were becoming more obvious.

Over the years I came to realize that my moments of youthful disapproval lacked understanding of Pope's very real contributions. With my own passing years I marvel at the level of productivity and mental agility he continued to demonstrate in his 9th decade, and can now appreciate that we were indeed involved in a pioneering project when I was in Shiraz.

Recently I have found myself defending him, mainly to speakers at international congresses devoted to Oriental carpets. This community, unaware of his other many activities, had been voicing disapproval because of his activities in the days when he supplied Oriental carpets for wealthy friends and museums.²¹ Even though other well-known and generally admired persons were involved in similar activities, the practice is harshly judged by today's standards. Carpets had indeed been his early passion but soon his attention was diverted by the architecture of Iran. Those whose principal interest in Pope concerns the study of carpets should be grateful to him, if only for the plates in the volume on carpets in *A Survey of Persian Art*.²²

Arthur Upham Pope was a man of multiple facets, but by the time he moved to Shiraz, his most active years were behind him. In a sense he outlived his own reputation since younger generations had been largely unaware of him. Today there is little acknowledgment of what he had achieved when he was under full sail. Even in his seventies and eighties, his level of activity had been astonishing. He was one of those complex individuals who always inspired mixed reviews, and was both adored and considered something of a charlatan. One must always consider the source. Pope was a perfect example of a very useful French expression: 'Il a les qualités de ses défauts' [his qualities were the measure of his flaws]. Americans have traditionally not dealt well with grey, wishing those we admire to behave like white knights. Some of Arthur's problems

21 Some individual efforts have been made to correct exaggerated accounts of Pope's supposed crimes. Professor Thomas Farnham has found evidence that both Dimand and Arthur Dilley were doing all they could to discredit Pope, with some success; his research into this subject is on-going (I am most grateful to Thomas Farnham for sharing his thoughts on Pope with me). See also Bloom's chapter, note 40.

22 There are 165 mainly classical rugs and fragments, some double-fold, and 62 color plates, many of which are more accurate than more recent reproductions of the same carpet.

he brought upon himself, but some resulted from the actions of others or just plain bad luck. British opinion has, I believe, been kinder to his reputation. Iranians treat him only with respect and gratitude. This present study of his life and career is most welcome.

Preparations in Isfahan for the final resting place of this remarkable couple were under way while I was in Shiraz, and inscriptions honoring the revered professor were to be carved around the base of its platform. Arthur dictated several phrases to me. Most are from recognizable sources, which were always cited, but once when I inquired after the origin of a quote, such as "He Was a Defender of Beauty and Truth," he replied "Never Mind." I am no longer convinced, as I was then, that he was the author of a few of those lofty expressions; he was possibly recalling some genuine tributes from days gone by, and there would have been many from which to choose. The door remains open to the possibility that one or two phrases were more recently minted, to round out his image for posterity.

Arthur wanted his monument to be of brickwork in the Seljuk style. The elderly mason from the mosque in Isfahan was to build it, as requested by the Shah. Pope had always understood that the masons were often the real 'architects' of many important structures, and he held this gentleman in high esteem. Most Westerners would have considered him a highly qualified bricklayer. The old man insisted on digging Arthur's grave himself.²³

Their tomb in Isfahan stands on a platform and is shaded by trees on the grassy banks of the Ziyanda Rud river, a few hundred yards from the great Khaju Bridge. I was able to visit it for the first time in 2004. Several people had spread blankets around the base of the tomb and were having picnics. I like to think that Pope and Ackerman would have approved. The site has remained unmolested, and an Iranian friend showed me additional decoration that had been added since the Revolution.

A guide was leading two American tourists to the spot, though surely neither of them would have understood why two American scholars would be so honored. Yet among the Iranians I encountered, of any age and social position, almost all recognized and revered Pope's name. In Tehran a street vendor had placed a later edition of one of the *Survey* volumes among his offerings. It was the only book on display.

Arthur Upham Pope was an extraordinary individual. Larger than life is an over-used expression but in his case it is apt. He was indisputably one of the most important figures in the field of Iranian Art and Archaeology, who had

23 *Surveyors*, 453.

fallen in love with Persia even before he travelled there, and spent the rest of his life making every effort to share his passion with the world.

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Index

- Ackerman, Phyllis 4, 9–10, 16, 34, 40, 46–49,
56–61, 68–71, 76, 79–82, 85–86, 88–91,
93–94, 121, 129, 157, 172, 181n, 185n, 196n,
206, 210n, 211–12, 217, 219, 221–22, 225n,
255, 272, 283, 295, 297–8, 302–6, 309,
311, 314, 316, 321, 363–4, 373–4, 378–9,
385, 397–8, 402, 404, 408, 410
encounter with Pope 56, 79, 171, 236
relocation to Iran 43, 93, 170n
work on textiles 40n, 57, 259, 406
- Adle, Chahriyar 29
- Afghanistan 24, 43, 53, 170, 333
- Aga Khan IV 93, 397n
- Ağa-Oğlu, Mehmet 8n, 59n, 131n, 243n, 248n
- ‘Ala’, Hussein 50, 61–62, 64, 83, 87, 91, 140,
357, 360, 375–6, 380
- Alp Arslan salver 6n, 42n, 94, 319–22
- American Institute for Persian Art and
Archaeology (AIPAA) 4n, 24, 36n, 47, 85,
98, 116, 128–9, 141, 150, 170n, 171, 173,
181n, 196n, 197, 206, 220, 248, 318, 328,
332, 336, 352, 355, 361, 374–8, 387, 390
Bulletin 22, 33, 38, 42, 59, 116, 119, 374n
See also Asia Institute
- Andarznama* 6n, 92, 94, 382, 385, 406
- Ardabil carpet 92, 250–1, 300, 363
- Ars Islamica* 32–33, 42, 120, 243n, 340
- Asia Institute 34, 43, 46–48, 64, 69–70, 85,
91, 93, 169n–71n, 214n, 215, 323–4,
328–9, 333, 336–7, 374n, 379, 397n,
400–2, 405
See also American Institute for Persian Art
and Archaeology (AIPAA); Shiraz
- Athar-é Iran* 31n, 32–33, 38, 40n, 42, 64, 119
- Bahrami, Mehdi 42n, 376
- Balanchine, George 92, 251
- Ballard, James F. 240, 250–1
- Bazl, Farajollah 39, 142, 328
- Becker, Carl Heinrich 242
- Benguitat, Ephraim 239
- Berchem, Max van 17
- Berenson, Bernard 3, 4n, 85, 242, 246–8
- Berlin 89, 137, 143, 148n, 182, 184–5, 193n, 211,
241–2, 256n, 258n, 293, 300, 332, 356
Asiatic Museum 240–2
- Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum 122, 173n,
180n, 184, 191–2, 208, 255, 282
- Museum of Islamic Art (Museum für
Islamische Kunst) 37, 208, 256, 364n
- Binyon, Lawrence 84, 179n
- Bode, Wilhelm von 173n, 241, 248
See also Berlin
- Boston 78–79, 130, 171, 376–7, 392
Museum of Fine Arts 86, 87n, 94, 128n,
144n, 146–7, 154, 178, 254n, 269, 281,
308–24, 372, 374
- Breasted, James Henry 37, 65, 98–100, 138,
140–1, 150–1, 155n, 156, 199, 223–4, 237n
See also Chicago
- Breasted, Charles 100, 143–4, 156, 223, 254n
- Bronstein, Léo 171n, 194n
- Buyid silks 94, 118
- Byron, Robert 23–24, 26, 33, 41n, 88, 118, 120,
142n, 328, 378
- Chicago 9, 84, 128n, 155n, 181–82, 224,
235–61, 267, 373, 377
Art Institute (AIC) 3, 81–82, 106–7, 146,
172, 176–7, 207, 227, 235, 237–61, 267n,
309, 377
Art Club of Chicago 249–59, 295–7
Chicago Tribune 254
Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets 19n,
248–59, 295
Field Museum of Natural History 85,
143, 144, 195–6, 200, 205, 207, 229, 237,
258
Oriental Institute (OI) 37, 65, 100, 103,
118, 130, 138, 140, 142–4, 146, 150–1, 154,
156, 202, 205n, 223–4, 237
World’s Columbian Exposition 234, 237,
239
- Cleveland 84, 267, 373, 377
Cleveland Museum of Art 88n, 151n,
216n, 267n, 272, 282n, 377, 406n
- Coomaraswamy, Ananda 84, 311–14, 316–17,
322
- Crane, Mary 22, 105, 333, 358, 363–6
- Creswell, K. A. C. 17, 32, 38, 43, 87, 115–7,
122–3, 211, 248n, 249
- Ctesiphon 191n–2n, 199, 204, 207n, 208

- Damghan 32n, 98, 101, 119, 128, 129n, 177n, 182n, 189, 197, 199–208, 222, 225n, 273, 328n
- Day, Florence 304
- Demotte, Georges 84, 247, 253, 295n, 297n
Great Mongol *Shahnama* 20, 84, 253
- Detroit 84, 267
Detroit Institute of Art 85, 146, 243n, 267n
- Diba, Farah (Empress, Shahbanu) 70–2, 170n, 380–1, 403
- Diez, Ernst 17, 38–39, 84
- Dimand, Maurice 8n, 20n, 87–88, 90, 94, 152, 190–6, 210, 217, 220, 257, 258n, 323, 397, 399, 409n
- Doha
Museum of Islamic Art 254, 316n, 392–3
- Duke, Doris 90, 355, 357, 360–1, 363–6, 392–3
Shangri La 355–6, 358–60
- Duveen, Joseph 7n, 84, 250–2, 375, 387
- Erdmann, Kurt 39, 210, 385
- Ettinghausen, Richard 90, 93–94, 97, 171n, 198n, 213n, 218n, 294, 303, 361, 363, 399, 400n, 406
- Fake 87, 92, 152, 160n, 212, 217, 239n, 299, 320, 366n, 406
- Forgery 6, 86, 89, 94, 191, 193n, 195, 214–5, 382, 406
- Foroughi, Muhammad 'Ali 50, 82–83, 135n, 357n
- Frye, Richard 4, 6n, 93
- Ghirshman, Roman 141n, 215n, 405
- Gluck, Jay 24, 59, 158, 379–80, 386, 402
- Godard, André 24, 27, 32–35, 39–40, 42–43, 62–65, 68, 83, 86, 112, 116, 119–21, 136, 140, 145n, 223n, 319, 348n
- Godard, Yedda 24n, 27, 42n, 65
- Golestan Palace 17, 87, 323
- Grabar, Oleg 4, 6n, 65, 116n, 215n, 390
- Gunbad-i Qabus 40, 110–1
- Heeramanek, Nasli 157, 189n
- Hekmat, 'Ali Asghar 62, 65, 134, 357n, 375
- Herzfeld, Ernst 9, 17, 28n, 35–39, 42–43, 50, 61, 63, 65, 83, 86, 88, 100, 105, 126, 128, 130, 135–45, 150–63, 184, 199–200, 202, 216, 221–5, 249, 319, 352, 354, 383
See also Persepolis
- Holmes, Edward Jackson 86, 154, 281, 311–5, 318–24, 376–7
See also Boston
- Isfahan 5, 29, 32, 39, 49, 54, 60, 66–68, 82, 86–87, 93, 149, 152, 154, 181, 190n, 266, 282, 300, 329–32, 336, 345–8, 352, 355–6, 348–9, 350, 388, 390, 403, 410
Masjid-i Shaykh Lutfallah 83, 329, 345–6, 348–50, 358, 360
Masjid-i Shah 19, 59, 84, 174n, 345, 351, 353–4
Masjid-i Jami' (Friday Mosque) 14, 20, 22, 29, 31n, 116, 119–20, 333n, 388–90, 408
Tombs of Pope and Ackerman 3, 43, 47, 49, 68, 70, 93, 410
- Istakhr 24n, 103, 105, 136–41, 151n, 153, 159, 170, 200, 202, 222–4
- Jayne, Horace 65, 130, 136–41, 145n, 150n, 152–3, 172, 176, 180–1, 185–7, 189, 191, 196–8, 202–3, 206, 220, 222–4, 318
See also Philadelphia
- Jordan, Samuel 65, 82
- Kansas City 9, 212n, 217n, 220, 267–89
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art 144n, 153n, 215n, 216, 220, 266–89
- Katchadourian, Sarkis 335, 336n
- Kelekian, Dikran Garabed 84, 144, 146, 148, 155, 239, 253, 361
- Kelley, Charles 243
- Kevorkian, Hagop 90, 159–60, 182–3, 191n, 215–8, 274, 282–3, 285, 363–4, 366, 382, 390, 392
- Kimball, Fiske 128, 130, 153, 157, 172, 176, 178, 180–89, 191, 195–7, 199, 202–5, 207–8, 223
See also Philadelphia
- Kish 20, 195–201, 204–7, 222
- Kuh-i Khwaja 100, 128
- Kühnel, Ernst 39, 84, 87, 159n, 161n, 179n, 188, 192, 195, 217, 294
See also Berlin

- Laufer, Berthold 85, 237n
- London 57, 81, 89, 90, 122, 161n, 182–3, 186–8, 190, 194n, 195–6, 199, 223, 253, 284, 291, 293–4, 299, 373, 375
- British Museum 421n, 86, 143–4, 150–1, 158, 182, 212, 249, 361
- Exhibition of Persian Art 15n, 17–19, 33, 59, 65, 85, 87, 89, 145, 148–50, 152, 171n, 186, 193, 212–3, 235, 250, 254n, 299n, 336, 352, 364, 374, 377, 392
- Illustrated London News* 59, 86, 129n, 162, 195, 206, 222
- Victoria and Albert Museum 87, 143, 149, 194n, 255n, 361
- Luristan bronzes 86–87, 94, 102, 128–9, 144, 156, 158, 163, 216n, 254n, 274, 310–1, 313–4, 361, 405
- Martin, Fredrik Robert 257, 259, 335n
- Mashhad 49, 68, 86–87, 120, 181n, 323, 330–32, 356, 359
- Shrine of Imam Reza 54, 326, 329, 337–42, 356–7, 376
- Migeon, Gaston 84, 179n
- Millsbaugh, Arthur 17, 173n
- Minuvi, Mujtaba 22n, 39
- Moore, Ada 88–89, 116, 118, 140–42, 150–1, 301–2, 378
- Moscow 60, 89, 122
- Munich 204n, 293
- Bernheimer 252, 253n, 259, 295
- Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology (1976) 36n, 60, 171n
- Exhibition of Muhammadan Art (1910) 8, 18, 79, 243, 246
- Murray, Wallace Smith 197n, 244
- Myers, George Hewitt 179n, 251–2, 290–306, 377
- See also* Washington, DC
- Negahban, Ezat 106, 404
- Nelson, William Rockhill 154, 219, 266–89
- See also* Kansas City
- New York 79, 81, 84–86, 89–93, 97, 128n, 144, 150, 153n, 160, 187, 194, 198n, 213, 217, 221, 236, 239, 253–5, 272, 273n, 274–5, 277, 283, 291, 293, 331, 335–6, 376–7, 392, 399, 405–6
- Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology (1960) 60, 66, 92, 171n, 248, 251n, 286n, 382
- Exhibition of Iranian Art (1940) 33, 60, 90, 92, 159, 171n, 213n, 286n, 302, 321, 363–4
- Hajji Baba Club 332
- Metropolitan Museum of Art 20n, 88n, 158, 194, 215n, 257, 282n, 322, 376–7, 397, 399
- New York Public Library 48, 58, 69, 148, 158, 191n–2n, 249n, 330n
- New York Times* 59, 68, 93, 173, 193, 206, 299, 323
- New York University 180, 333, 399
- See also* American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology; Asia Institute
- Nyman, Stephen 9, 326–66
- Orbeli, Josif 212, 214, 216n, 219
- See also* St. Petersburg (Leningrad)
- Paris 18, 57, 86, 89, 93, 144–6, 149–50, 154, 160, 178n, 181–85, 187, 191, 193, 213n, 220n, 283–5, 286n, 291, 293, 365, 375, 382, 397n, 399
- Bibliothèque Nationale 212
- Guimet Museum (Musée Guimet) 122
- Louvre Museum (Musée du Louvre) 155n, 186n, 270, 362
- Parish-Watson 93n, 254, 361
- Pasargadae 100, 383–5, 388
- Persepolis 37, 99–100, 102, 105–6, 118, 126–63, 176n, 200, 202, 205n, 214, 222–4, 310n, 342, 355, 378, 381, 383, 389
- 2,500th Anniversary of the Persian Empire (1971) 92, 385
- Philadelphia 98, 128n, 130, 135, 139, 191, 202n, 204n, 205n, 223, 382,
- Congress of Persian Art and Archaeology (1926) 19, 59, 84, 171n, 180n
- Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology (1960) 60, 92
- Philadelphia Museum of Art (Pennsylvania Museum) 106, 138, 173, 177–9, 186, 189, 190n, 196, 190–1, 200, 203, 204n, 282, 316n

- Philadelphia (cont.)
 Sesquicentennial Exposition 84, 168,
 172–6, 235, 259, 335
 University Museum 178, 187, 200
- Qom 82–83, 86
- Rabenou, Ayoub 5, 41, 105, 128, 130, 137,
 145–6, 148–50, 152, 158, 160–1, 183–9,
 192, 196, 214n, 215–6, 219, 283–5, 360–3,
 365
- Rabenou, Khalil 183
- Rayy (Rhages) 24n, 90, 100–2, 121, 128–9, 178,
 182, 202n, 273, 280, 318–9, 362
 Chal Tarkhan 106, 177, 182
- Reza Shah 4n, 16–17, 33, 49–51, 54–55,
 63–64, 66, 87, 97–98, 116, 119, 135n, 140,
 169, 173, 183, 246, 324, 329, 333–4, 342,
 344–6, 348, 358, 374n, 378–82
- Reza Shah, Muhammad 64–67, 169n, 323,
 329, 344, 349n, 352n, 379–80, 382, 385
 Visit to the US (1949) 66n, 90, 179n, 215,
 323, 376
 Visit to the US (1964) 93, 379
- Riefstahl, Rudolf A. Meyer 15n, 76, 79, 87,
 196, 236n, 248n, 294, 312
- Rockefeller, John D. 84, 140n–1n, 223n, 250
- Samarra 100–1, 184, 249
- Sarre, Friedrich 17, 38–39, 84–85, 87, 150,
 153, 179n, 180, 188, 194, 248n, 255–6,
 258n
See also Berlin
- Sarre, Maria 215
- Sauvaget, Jean 17, 40, 210
- Saveh 49, 310
- Schapiro, Meyer 38, 40n, 43n, 113–4, 206, 211,
 317
- Schmidt, Erich, F. 24, 27, 65, 96–103, 105, 128,
 130, 142, 150, 182n, 202–4, 206–7, 222n,
 223, 225n, 318–9, 383
See also Damghan; Persepolis
- Schroeder, Eric 20–23, 34, 39–40, 116, 120,
 211, 328, 374n
 Plan of the Friday Mosque of
 Isfahan 31n, 388
- Shapely, John 179n
- Shepherd, Dorothy 88n, 151n, 214n
- Shiraz 3, 43, 47–49, 60, 67–69, 70n, 82,
 93–94, 121–2, 128, 135, 169n–71n, 259,
 323, 328–9, 330n, 374n, 377n, 379, 390,
 397, 399, 401–3, 405, 408–10
 Narenjestan 70, 93, 106, 121, 170n, 379,
 396, 401, 403
See also Asia Institute
- Siroux, Maxime 42n, 62–63, 68
- Smith, Myron Bement 23–24, 26, 28–32,
 34–35, 40, 41n, 42, 43n, 116–9, 141, 156,
 190n–1n, 193–4, 195n, 321, 335, 345n,
 346–7, 390
- Smith, Robert Murdoch 127n, 143n,
 345n–6n, 364n
- Society for National Heritage (SNH) 47,
 49–50, 55–56, 62–64, 66–68, 342, 345n,
 355, 357, 360, 375, 378
- Stead, Rexford 58, 68n, 142, 246, 328
- Stein, Sir Aurel 101, 157n, 197
- Stora 143–4, 146, 148–51, 155, 253–4, 310, 316n
- Strzygowski, Josef 7, 17, 52, 87, 190n, 209–10
- St. Petersburg (Leningrad) 213n
 State Hermitage Museum 89, 212, 214,
 216n, 219–20
 Exhibition of Persian Art (1935) 60, 89,
 162, 171n, 212, 221n
- Sullivan, Louis 239
- Sultaniya 40
- Survey of Persian Art* 6, 20, 32, 34, 39, 43, 47,
 85, 89, 118, 149, 170n, 207n, 208, 248n,
 275, 306, 311, 315, 328, 372–93, 407, 409
 review 33, 317
- Surveyors of Persian Art* 4, 69, 118, 329, 397n
- Susa 97, 101, 128n, 129n, 132, 135, 148, 199
- Sykes, Christopher 88, 118n
- Takht-i Sulayman 41, 102–4, 386–8
- Taylor, Otis 22
- Tehran 27, 29n, 49–50, 60, 62–63, 82–83, 88,
 93, 97, 100, 128, 138, 145, 152, 158, 161n,
 162, 214, 216, 222n, 329–32, 334–6,
 342–5, 355, 363, 375, 378, 401, 403–6, 410
 Archaeological Museum 62–63, 65, 323,
 376
 National Bank (Bank-i Melli) 63, 344,
 386
 Past and Future of Persian Art 8n, 50, 56,
 82, 97n, 169n, 226, 244, 378

- University of Tehran 65, 93, 352
 Teymourtash, Abdolhussein 51, 140
 Trever, Camilla 212, 214, 216n

 Upton, Joseph 159n, 161n, 222n

 Valentiner, William 85
 Villard, Ugo Monneret de 188, 199

 Warburg, Edward 88, 96, 198, 328, 361
 Washington, DC 9, 50, 83–84, 93, 291, 331,
 334, 366n, 376–7
 Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology
 (1960) 60, 92, 171n, 382
 Congress of Persian Art and Archaeology
 (1926) 84, 171n, 180n
 Dumbarton Oaks 214, 377
 Freer Gallery of Art 90, 93, 158, 213, 217,
 241, 361

 National Archives 29n
 Textile Museum 84, 252, 291–306
 Welch, Stuart Cary 4, 17, 120
 Wilber, Donald 20, 22–23, 25, 29, 32–35, 55,
 61, 64, 89, 100, 104–5, 118, 328, 333, 387
 Work on Ilkhanid architecture 23, 32, 34,
 38, 117
 Work for the Central Intelligence Agency
 (CIA) 92n, 379
 Wilkinson, Charles 16n, 94, 216, 217n, 399,
 400n
 Wulsin, Frederick 65, 100, 135–6, 139–40, 271,
 273, 319
 See also Philadelphia

 Yazd 49, 314, 403

 Ziegler, Carl 84, 173